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ABSTRACT

A model program was designed and implemented to effectively develop and maintain communication skills in the children of an urban K-6 school. The goals of the program were to reverse a trend in under-achievement in five academic areas, to identify and develop potential in communication skills in two targeted groups of children, to create staff awareness of alternatives for instruction of communication skills, and to improve interaction and involvement among teachers and parents at school and in the community. The core of the program was knowledge of the child and how he learns, and teacher competence and flexibility in offering instruction in eclectic tactics. The two targeted groups of children demonstrated skill improvement and maintenance of these skills after a period without instruction. Parents, staff, and education office personnel judged the program favorably. (Author/RLV)

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DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM IN AN URBAN K-6 SCHOOL

Joan S. Patterson

1979

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM IN AN URBAN K-6 SCHOOL

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Descriptors: *Communication Skills/Classroom Communication/ Communicative Competence/Visual Literacy/Daily Living Skills/ Language Skills/Receptive Language/Teaching Skills/Total Communication/Verbal Communication/*Writing Skills/*Listening Skills/Listening/*Reading Development/*Reading Instruction/ Language Experience Approach/*Reading Programs/*Reading Skills/ *Speaking/Expressive Language.

A task force led by the author designed and implemented a model program to effectively develop and maintain communication skills in the children of an urban K-6 school. The goals of the program were to reverse a trend of under-achievement in five academic areas, to identify and develop potential in communication skills in two targeted groups of children, to create awareness of a professional staff of alternatives and options for instruction of communication skills, and to improve involvement and interaction among teachers and parents at school and in the community.

The program contained nine basic components: identifying the children with undeveloped potential and their needs; assessing strategies and materials available in the community and in the school; selecting appropriate tactics and materials

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to meet the needs of the children; developing and implementing the program; training the staff; involving the community; evaluating the results in terms of individually predicted growth; refining with conclusions and recommendations; and institutionalizing and disseminating the program.

The core of the program was knowledge of the child and how he learns, and teacher competence and flexibility in offering instruction in eclectic tactics. Setting reasonable expectations and making necessary adjustments were planned for in the mechanics of the program that involved flexible grouping and team teaching. Parents, staff, and Central Office personnel judged the program favorably. The two targeted groups of children demonstrated skill improvement and maintenance of those skills after a period without instruction. The model has been continued in the pilot school and recommended for institutionalizing in the school district and in some private schools in the city. (Appendices include forms for selection of effective programs to study or visit, analyzing instructional organization, a reading program assessment, assessing grouping and program articulation, a campus inventory of instructional resources, a teachers' observation checklist, a parent observation checklist, a skills system for the Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS), and a list of activities to develop listening skills.)

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM IN AN URBAN K-6 SCHOOL

by Joan S. Patterson[1]

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the National Ed.D. Program
for Educational Leaders, Nova University.

Individual Practicum
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Submitted: October 5, 1979

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Dallas Independent
School District

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Illustrations iv

Tables v

Introduction 1

Chapter I
The Educational Setting in Which the Program Took Place 6
- Demographic Data about the School and Students 6
- Teachers Experience and Background 6
- Home and Family Background of Students 9

Chapter II
Identifying the Problem in Terms of Documented Manifested Need 12
- Identifying Students Who May Have the Ability to Achieve at Some Higher Level 12
- Identifying the Targeted Students 16

Chapter III
Performance Outcome Objectives 23

Chapter IV
Summary of Literature and Research to Determine Appropriate Strategy for a Communication Skills Program 31
- Review of Literature 31
- Research by Program Director and Staff 36
- Programs in McKinley Elementary: Past and Present 36
  - Past: The Exemplary Reading Program 36
  - Present: The Basal Reading Program 37
- Compiling the Results and Reporting Responses . . . 46

Chapter V
The Strategy and Tactics of an Eclectic Communication Skills Program 47
- Definition and Description of an Eclectic Program 47
- The Rationale for Eclecticism 47

Tactics and Materials Selected For an Eclectic Strategy 48
Tactics and Materials Selected from Programs Visited in Other Schools 48
Tactics and Materials Selected from McKinley Resources and Staff 52
Mechanics of the Instructional Program 55
Team Teaching 56
Grouping 58
Scheduling 61
Community Involvement 62
Staff Development 64

Chapter VI

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program 68
Formative Evaluation 68
Summative Evaluation 72
Presentation, Collection, and Analysis of Data 77
Skills Improvement Objectives 77
Discussion about Skills Improvement Objectives 94
Maintenance of Skills Objectives 97
Comparison of Predicted and Achieved Scores 103
Discussion of Maintenance of Skills 106

Chapter VII

Unanticipated Outcomes 110

Chapter VIII

Conclusions and Recommendations 115
Conclusions 115
Recommendations 117

Chapter IX

Institutionalizing and Disseminating the Eclectic Communication Skills Program 119

Chapter X

Summary 122
Appendices 124
A. Selection of Effective Programs to Study or Visit 125
B. Analyzing Instructional Organization 126
C. Reading Program Assessment 127
D. Assessing Grouping and Program Articulation . . 128
E. Campus Inventory of Instructional Resources . . 129

F. Dallas Independent School District Teachers' Observation Checklist 130
G. Dallas Independent School District Parent Observation Checklist 131
H. Skills System for the Test of Essential Reading Skills 132
I. Activities to Develop Listening Skills 134

Bibliography 138

ILLUSTRATIONS

Chart

1. TERS Standard Score Gain for Group B Target Children Fall 1978-Spring 1979 78
2. Target Group B Basal Reader Placement Fall 1978-Spring 1979 81
3. Target Group B Comparison of Predicted TERS Scores and Achieved TERS Scores, Fall 1979 . . 83
4. Target Group D Test of Essential Reading Skills Fall 1978-Spring 1979 87
5. Basal Placement Gain for Group D Fall 1978-Spring 1979 89
6. Target Group D Comparison of Predicted TERS Scores and Achieved TERS Scores, Fall 1979 . . 91

Graph

1. Target Group B Comparison of Predicted and Achieved Basal Placement for Fall 1979 85
2. Target Group D Comparison of Predicted and Achieved Basal Placement for Fall 1979 93

Figure

1. How Children Learn to Communicate 2
2. Profile of McKinley Elementary 7
3. McKinley School Staff 57
4. One Pattern for Flexible Grouping 60

TABLES

1. A Comparison of Median Scores Iowa Test of Basic Skills for McKinley Elementary Students (N=397) with Large City Norms, Spring 1978 . . . 11
2. Two Year Comparison of Iowa Test of Basic Skills Median Percentiles (National Norms) for 5 Groups of Students Spring 1977, 1978 14
3. Student Data Form for Target Group B Children . . 20
4. Student Data Form for Target Group D Children . . 21
5. Student Data Form for Target Group B Children . . 26
6. Student Data Form for Target Group D Children . . 27
7. Student Data Form for Target Group B Children . . 73
8. Student Data Form for Target Group D Children . . 75
9. TERS Standard Score Gain for Group B Target Children Fall 1978-Spring 1979 78
10. Group B Percent Mastery Gain TERS Fall 1978-Spring 1979 79
11. Basal Reader Placement Gain for Group B Target Students in Grade Equivalent Scores Fall 1978-Spring 1979 80
12. Target Group B Predicted TERS Scores compared with Achieved TERS Scores, Fall 1979 82
13. Target Group B Predicted and Achieved Basal Placement for Fall 1979 84
14. Target Group D Comparison of Achieved TERS Scores Fall 1978-Spring 1979 86
15. Target Group D Percent Mastery Gain TERS Fall 1978-Spring 1979 88
16. Basal Reader Placement Gain for Group D Target Students in Grade Equivalent Scores Fall 1978-Spring 1979 89
17. Target Group D Predicted Scores and Achieved Scores on Test of Essential Reading Skills Fall 1979 . 90
18. Target Group D Comparison of Predicted and Achieved Basal Placement, Fall 1979 92
19. Target Group B Comparison for Maintenance of Skills on Test of Essential Reading Skills Spring 1979-Fall 1979 99
20. Target Group D Comparison for Maintenance of Skills on Test of Essential Reading Skills Spring 1979-Fall 1979 100
21. Target Group B Comparison of Achieved TERS Scores for Children who Attended Summer School, 1979 . 101
22. Target Group D Comparison of Achieved TERS Scores for Children who Attended Summer School, 1979 . 102
23. Target Group B Comparison of Achieved TERS Scores for Spring, Summer, and Fall 1979 with Predicted Scores 104

24. Target Group D Comparison of Achieved TERS Scores for Spring, Summer, and Fall, 1979 with Predicted Scores 106

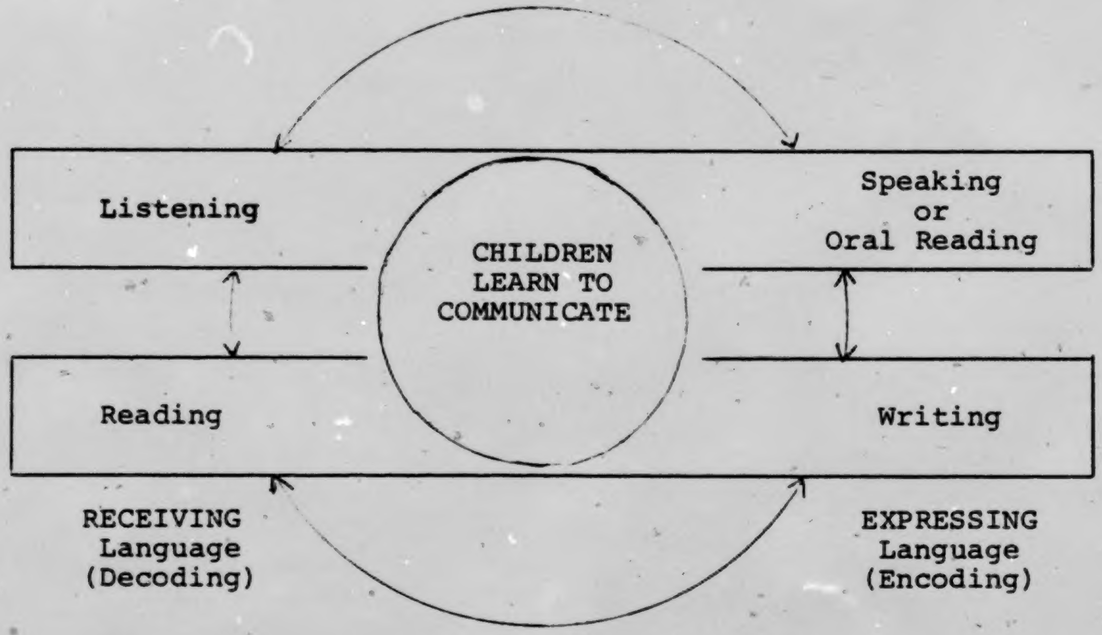
INTRODUCTION

Communicating successfully is possibly *the* most important skill a person must develop to function effectively in all areas of living. The more complex our society becomes the more important it is for public schools to improve their techniques and approaches to assisting boys and girls in the development of this vital area.

Sara W. Lundsteen in her monograph, Listening: Its Impact on Reading and the Other Language Arts, offers a model diagram of how children learn to communicate (Figure 1, page 2). Dr. Lundsteen placed listening in the beginning position in the upper lefthand corner of her illustration since listening vocabularies are normally learned first. She continued her explanation of the diagram about how children learn to communicate:

> . . . But listening is not in a watertight compartment by itself. Instead, arrows in the diagram show constant interaction. Further, notice the language pairs of receiving discourse on the left and expressing discourse on the right of the diagram. Sometimes, incidentally, the receiving with comprehension is referred to as "decoding" and the expression or sending is referred to as "encoding." To illustrate, take a child moving through the parts of this diagram. Ted listens to his name being called for a game, or he reads it on the class "taking-turns" chart. In both cases he receives a message--represented by the lefthand side of the model which follows. If Ted then moves over to the game center of the classroom, there is reasonable assurance of the reception; and if he receives no remonstrance, he has increased assurance. On the

Figure 1. HOW CHILDREN LEARN TO COMMUNICATE


Listening
Speaking or Oral Reading
CHILDREN LEARN TO COMMUNICATE
Reading
Writing
RECEIVING Language (Decoding)
EXPRESSING Language (Encoding)

(Language Operates in Pairs in Constant Interaction with Listening Foremost)

Source: Sara Lundsteen, Listening: Its Impact on Reading and the Other Language Arts (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on the Teaching of English, 1971), p. 13.

> right-hand side of the model, however, Ted may be calling out (speaking) the name of a player or writing the name for the chart. If the appropriate child responds, Ted may be reasonably sure that he has used adequately the expressive side of the communication model. But conceivably if Ted, as receiver or expresser, had never heard and comprehended the sound symbols that represent the name in the first place, it is doubtful that any kind of communication would get off the ground. That is all this simple model attempts to represent.[1]

Today the communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are generally incorporated in one discipline in the elementary public school. That one discipline is reading. It is the time devoted to reading where all communication skills are developed and measured as one skill.

Since this is the case, a communication skills program was developed and implemented in a large urban school district under the umbrella of reading. It would be easy to write extensively about each strand of communication skills and not cover all the experiences and literature. Thus some limitations had to be established for the purpose of clarity.

Human beings tend to resist change and teachers needed training in developing curricula and instruction in areas other than reading. Therefore, reading continued to be the area used for measurement of effectiveness of all communication skills. It was the local school district's criterion referenced reading test that teachers used frequently and routinely that made them feel more comfortable in broadening their program. The Research and Evaluation Department also used reading and the composite score on the district-wide norm referenced standardized test for evaluation. This traditional measure offered security in the desire to implement the communication skills program district-wide in the future. It also acted as a tool for measurement of effectiveness of federally funded programs.

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[1] Sara Lundsteen, Listening: Its Impact on Reading and the Other Language Arts (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on the Teaching of English, 1971), p. 13.

This new program was limited to one elementary school with a diversified low income minority population. Although the program was offered to more than four hundred students, for the purpose of the first year's study its effectiveness was measured by changes in scores of 34 percent of two classes, the fourth and sixth grades. These two classes had scored higher in previous years but were now digressing with negative scores on individual and group tests.

Many pilot programs are judged by a comparison of pretest and post-test scores at the beginning and end of a school year. Yet the real measure of any learning is how well the child is able to use and maintain that skill after instruction has been completed and reinforcement is no longer available. Therefore, a maintenance component was added to the communication skills program. Fall 1979 scores for the targeted group in Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS) were predicted. The predicted scores were based on individual student data, research, experience of the author-director, and publisher's standards.

The targeted group of children was identified as having undeveloped potential using the recommendations from teachers and parents who responded to an observation checklist. This information, regular criterion and norm referenced test scores, as well as placement in the basal reader, were all considered to identify students with chances for success.

A commitment was made by this author to success in performance by the children. Although the time covered by this report is March 1978 to Fall 1979, actual involvement in the communication skills program by the children was approximately eight months.

CHAPTER I

THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING IN WHICH THE PROGRAM TOOK PLACE

Demographic Data about the School and Students

McKinley was built in 1922, and in 1978 had a total enrollment of 397 students. It was a K-6 neighborhood school that was not impacted by court ordered busing because it was naturally integrated. Figure 2, page 7, offers a profile of the school.

Ethnic distribution of the student population was approximately 40 percent white, 39 percent Mexican American and 21 percent black.

An average of 23 percent of the enrolled students were involved in a mobility transaction (new student, transfer in/out, withdrawal and reentries) on any given day. Mobility had increased yearly for McKinley students. The average daily membership for each grade was approximately 55 with 92 percent daily attendance.

McKinley Elementary qualified as a Title I school for the first time in 1976.

Teachers Experience and Background

Participants of the International Reading Association

Figure 2. PROFILE OF McKINLEY ELEMENTARY

Built in 1922 Total Enrollment 397 Grades K-6

Supplementary School-Realted Factors

School	ADM	ADA	MOB	BUS	WHT	BLK	MEX	DEP	SES
McKinley	55	92	23	0	40	21	39	56	38

(School Variables)

ADM=Aver. Daily Membership
ADA=% Aver. Daily Attend.
MOB=% Student Mobility
BUS=% Students Bussed In
WHT=% Other
BLK=% Black
MEX=% Mexam
DEP=% Free Lunch 56% (below USOE poverty guidelines)
SES=Socio-Econ. Status*

*SES=Socioeconomic Status-The composite score based on a factor analysis of items reflecting material possessions, size of family unit, socio-cultural activities, use of a non-English language, and education attainment/occupational status of parents. The index ranged roughly from 25 to 75 with the average for the DISD being 50. An index of 25 indicates low SES while an index of 75 indicates high SES.

Teacher Characteristics

School	FEM	WHT	BLK	MEX	BA	MA	EXP	AGE	ATR	NEW
McKinley	81	69	25	6	63	38	81	69	6	18

(Teacher Variables)

FEM=% Female
WHT=% Other
BLK=% Black
MEX=% Mexam
BA=% with Bachelors Degree
MA=% With Graduate Degree
EXP=% > 5 Yrs. Experience
AGE=% < 35 Yrs. Old
ATR=Attrition Rate
New=% New to Building This Year

Student Achievement Factors, 1978
Norm-Referenced, Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Range of Median Percentiles

Reading	Language	Mathematics
3-85	1-75	4-64

Conference at Anaheim, California in 1970 heard Ruth Marks report research to substantiate her statement that:

> . . . the beginning teacher at either elementary or secondary level enters the profession woefully lacking in the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure success in instruction. Evidence of teacher training deficiencies have been cited in the literature for a number of years. New teachers commonly confront certain kinds of problems with which most experienced teachers have learned to cope.[1]

Teachers at McKinley Elementary were 81 percent female and 81 percent of all teachers had less than five (5) years experience. Sixty-three percent of the teachers had only a Bachelor's Degree. Sixty-nine percent of the faculty was less than 35 years old. The attrition rate representing the percent of teachers who resigned from teaching in the district among the total faculty was 6 percent. Of the total faculty 69 percent were white, 25 percent were black, and 6 percent were Mexican-American.

Graham states that the beginning teacher has not been effectively prepared to cope with the educational problems of students coming from low income homes, or homes with a different cultural pattern from the one usually labeled "American." Graham says this is evidenced by the fact that only 19 percent of all prospective teachers graduating in 1970 were willing to teach in large city school systems or rural areas.[1]

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[1] Ruth A. Marks, "Preparation, Induction and Follow Up of Beginning Teachers," in Reading Methods and Teacher Improvement, edited by Nila Blanton Smith (Newark: International Reading Association, 1971), p. 152.

Home and Family Background of Students

Generally neither the mothers nor fathers of children at McKinley had education beyond high school and many had only elementary school education. Of these families 56 percent were below the United States Office of Education (USOE) poverty guidelines. It was not unusual for an Anglo parent to bring a child(ren) to McKinley School and be unable to read or write well enough to enroll the children. Many of the Mexican-American parents were unable to speak English and their children were either non-English speaking or limited in English.

A report from the Department of Research and Evaluation offered a socioeconomic status score (SES) of 38. The DISD index ranged roughly from 25 to 75. Thus a SES score of 38 was 12 points below the average for the school district and only 13 points above the base score of extreme socioeconomic status. Edith H. Grotberg in her article, "Implications of Some Current Issues and Practices for the Reading Teacher," states:

> . . . the findings generally agree that deprivation is involved in the poorer academic performance of disadvantaged children. Deprivation may derive from malnutrition . . . from understimulation or over stimulation . . . from limited language experiences. . . . Deprivation may derive from limited

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[1] Richard Graham, "The Teacher Corps: One Place to Begin," in Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, (October 1968):52.

> social-emotion experiences. . . . Children can handle a few assaults on their organism, not multiple assaults. Racial and ethnic prejudices, as well as a continuing antipathy toward low income families in general, conspire to inflict multiple assaults on the children.
>
> Deprivation would not be so serious a matter if we had sufficient evidence that the effects of deprivation might be ameliorated at anytime by adequate intervention of compensatory programs. . . . The fact of deleterious effects of deprivation is accepted. . . . But a case may be made for early intervention with children who are the victims of deprivation. . . . The longer they go without, the more disparate is their performance compared to others or compared to their own potentials.[1]

This pattern and prophecy of author Grotberg was evidenced in the students and families of McKinley Elementary School. The need for intervention existed.

Results of norm-referenced achievement tests in reading, language, and mathematics were reflective of past achievement at McKinley School. At least 50 percent of the students scored in the first quartile, the same interval as the lowest 25 percent of the large city norm group. Half of all students scored the same as the lowest quartile of the norm group in reading, language, and math. Table 1, page 11, a comparison of median scores for McKinley school over large city norms in reading, yields this information.

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[1] Edith H. Grotberg, "Implications of Some Current Issues and Practices for the Reading Teacher," in Better Reading in Urban Schools, edited by J. Allen Figurel (Newark: International Reading Association, 1972), p. 56.

TABLE 1

A Comparison of Median Scores
Iowa Test of Basic Skills
for McKinley Elementary Students (N=397)
with Large City Norms, Spring 1978

	McKinley	Large City Norms
2nd Grade	Percentile 20	Percentile 50
3rd Grade	Percentile 20	Percentile 50
4th Grade	Percentile 22	Percentile 50
5th Grade	Percentile 21	Percentile 50
6th Grade	Percentile 20	Percentile 50

To summarize the preceding data one had a global picture of McKinley Elementary, a building erected in 1922 in the "Bonnie and Clyde" type of neighborhood. It had a faculty of mainly white young teachers with limited teaching experience and the basic college education of a bachelor's degree.

These teachers served a student population from very low socioeconomic families, mainly Anglo, with the Mexican-American families increasing in number. The parents had limited education that is concomitant with a different value system than the stereotyped Anglo middle class school. Communication skills were a part of the fall-out or loss of value and development within these limitations.

The children reflected the limits of environment and instructional opportunity (deprivation) by their achievement scores on standardized norm referenced tests.

CHAPTER II

IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM IN TERMS OF DOCUMENTED MANIFESTED NEED

On March 30, 1978 the P.T.A. Board, the Faculty Advisory Committee, the principal, and the Instructional Leader met to review achievement and programs for McKinley students. As the discussion focused on reading development, language barriers, and learning disabilities, the need for an effective communication skills program emerged. As a result of this meeting, a task force was appointed on April 10 from the staff and community to investigate the need and resources for such a communication skills program.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, April 4 and 5, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) was administered to the student body by representatives from Research and Evaluation. One month later, May 9, the results were received. The task force had already formulated a plan to appraise programs in other schools, as well as a self-assessment by the McKinley staff and an assessment of its resources, by the end of April. On May 10 they started a comparison and review of ITBS scores.

Identifying Students Who May Have the Ability to Achieve at Some Higher Level

A two year comparison of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for five groups of students is offered in Table 2, page 14. This is a comparison of median percentile scores of children of McKinley with national norms for the two Spring evaluation periods of 1977 and 1978. The average median percentiles for those two years for the school as a whole reflected no growth or negative gain.

Group B children scored negatively in vocabulary, word analysis, reading, language, math, and the composite tests. Group D children scored negatively in vocabulary, work study, reading, language, math, and the composite tests. By this one standardized test used in this school district to determine placement and program opportunities for the complete 1979 school year, these classes scored below national norms and a "no growth" comparison with their own previous performance.

Norm referenced tests such as the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills are difficult to deal with. By the very nature of a normative population 50 percent of any group must fall below the mean. Yet a student whose score is below the mean may be achieving to his capacity. Therefore, norm referenced tests are inadequate to use alone for predicting potential achievement of a student when comparison is made to the norm.

But norm referenced tests can be used to predict potential if comparison is made only between what a student has scored in the past and what he is scoring now. This historical evidence of a certain higher percentile in the past can be

TABLE 2

Two Year Comparison of
Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Median Percentiles (National Norms)
for 5 Groups of Students
Spring 1977, 1978

	Vocabulary	Work Study	Word Analysis	Reading	Language	Math	Composite
GROUP A							
1st Grade '77	31		30	36	35	45	28
2nd Grade '78	38		25	40	13	22	26
	+7		-5	+4	-22	-23	-2
***GROUP B							
2nd Grade '77	32		25	40	24	22	31
3rd Grade '78	22		8	18	18	10	8
	-11		-17	-22	-6	-12	-23
GROUP C							
3rd Grade '77	22		9	9	12	13	4
4th Grade '78	20	12		25	9	7	9
	+2			+16	-3	-6	+5
***GROUP D							
4th Grade '77	14	5		17	6	4	5
5th Grade '78	9	1		4	2	1	1
	-5	-4		-13	-4	-3	-4
GROUP E							
5th Grade '77	4	1		4	2	1	1
6th Grade '78	11	5		10	8	5	8
	+7	+4		+6	+6	+4	+7
AVERAGES	0	0		-9	-30	-40	-17

assumed to suggest undeveloped potential--at least to the previous level.

The task force and other faculty members believed there were students who could score better than they did on the ITBS. They decided to compare individual scores of students, especially those of Group B and Group D.

There were other measures to compare and evaluate, too. The Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS) was a locally designed criterion referenced test that was being used for the third year. This mandatory test was designed to yield a reading level as well as indicate strengths and weaknesses in skill areas. Criterion referenced tests are designed to measure specific behaviors performed by an individual until he has achieved a level of mastery. The author of the test defines the level of mastery or development necessary for a specific skill in behavioral terms. In Dallas, as elsewhere, criterion referenced testing (TERS) was an ongoing process of goal setting, instruction, practice, evaluating, and marking a progress form when mastery was achieved. A comparison of individual students progress on the TERS was done by each teacher.

A student's achievement in other areas and in teacher-made tests also was compared. Thus basal reading level and how a student had progressed in previous years was noted. Mastery, or lack of it, in math was used as an indicator of potential.

The school board policy of Dallas schools prohibits the use of any instrument directly defined to measure cognative ability. But teachers and others believed many in the student body had the ability to perform at a higher level. Friday, May 12, the task force consulted with the Director of Research and Evaluation to identify students with the potential to achieve at a higher level.

The results of the above formal and informal measures of achievement and competency for students in Group B and Group D were surveyed and discussed in depth. These rising fourth and sixth grade classes were identified as most needy of help. And, as teachers and the task force reviewed individual scores, several children were believed to have more potential than scores suggested.

Identifying the Targeted Students

Consistency among the three measures of ITBS, TERS, and basal placement could have suggested a student was performing to capacity. Limited by school board policy that restricted cognative testing, the task force wanted to identify those students with the best chance of growth in Groups B and D.

For many years the oral reading test, the silent diagnostic reading test, and the individual intelligence test formed the backbone of diagnostic procedure. As the complexity of the communicating process has received increasing recognition, the need for teacher observation and a combination of other diagnostic instruments has become apparent.

Today parent response and involvement in reports concerning their children is considered a vital tool. Therefore, parents were asked to complete a Parent Observation Checklist (appendix G, page 131) and the results recorded as negative (-) or positive (+) reflecting their responses about their children.

The other necessary component in identifying potential was teacher observations. From their records, teachers identified children whom they believed were achieving to capacity or could achieve beyond recorded measures. These observations were recorded on a Teachers' Observation Checklist (appendix F, page 130) and the responses weighed to identify students with more potential. But there is agreement with Professor Ruth Strang's statement, "No entirely satisfactory method of diagnosing potential has yet been found."[1] Professor Strang has also written:

> Ability to comprehend by listening, sometimes called auding, is one of the best single indications of potential ability. If an individual comprehends a passage read aloud better than he comprehends a comparable passage that he reads silently, the prognosis for improvement in communication skills is favorable. For prognastic purposes, tests of listening comprehension are being recommended in addition to individual intelligence tests.[2]

Albert Harris, another authority, supports Strang in this contention when he states:

> Reading capacity can be indicated . . . by tests designed to test listening comprehension. Reading

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[1] Ruth Strang, Diagnostic Teaching of Reading (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 212.

[2] Ibid., p. 13.

> capacity can be measured with book samples. . . . continue up the series reading selections to the child and checking comprehension. . . . If a child cannot understand material which is above his reading level, he is probably already functioning at capacity.[1]

George Spache, in the Manual for his Diagnostic Reading Scales, states:

> Comparison of the means for Potential Level with the actual grade placement indicates that many children show auditory comprehension of materials two years above their present grade levels. This differential has been found in numerous studies. . . . It is possible for the Potential Level to be raised or lowered by the nature of the instruction given the student, or by the effects of his environment.[2]

Many authorities suggest that proper remedial training should enable every student to grow to a level equal to his mental age. This is probably true, in a general sense; logically, one student should be able to communicate as well as others of equal mental age, if all are trained appropriately. In actuality, this correspondence of potential and performance is not parallel. Obstacles such as delayed speech, defects of articulation, bilingual background, severe emotional problems and various handicaps in vision and hearing are some of the limitations to developing potential. For this reason those students identified as manifesting any of these obstacles were omitted from the study. This included students in Special Education classes and bilingual classes.

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[1] Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, 4th ed., rev. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1966), p. 301.

[2] George D. Spache, Diagnostic Reading Scales Revised Edition (Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, Calif.: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1972), p. 27.

These findings were all compiled and a targeted group identified. From Group B (N=47) 17 students were identified as able to achieve beyond where they were functioning. From Group D (N=52) 18 students were identified as able to achieve higher. The Student Data Form was the instrument used to collect and report the pertinent information about each target group. Table 3, page 20, was the Student Data Form for Group B, fourth grade children; table 4, page 21, was the Student Data Form for Group D, sixth grade children.

Column one identifies the student, columns two and three are an interpretation of teacher and parent observation checklist responses as to whether each believed the student was able to achieve beyond where he was now performing. Column four was the score obtained by the student in the individually administered Spache Listening (Potential) test.

The next four columns were observed TERS scores for September 1978, May 1979, July 1979, and September 1979.

Predicted scores based on all collected data are in columns nine and ten. Column nine is the anticipated score for TERS at the beginning of the next school year (1979-80). Column ten is the anticipated basal placement for the child. These are the individual terminal performance objectives for each child.

Columns eleven and twelve are actual observed basal placement September 1978 and May/September 1979. Basal placement is the same at the beginning of school in the Fall as it

TABLE 3

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR
TARGET GROUP B CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	5.5	21						2.7			
2	+	+	5.5	21						2.1			
3	+	+	4.5	12						1.2			
4	+	+	6.5	54						5.0			
5	-	+	3.8	23						2.8			
6	+	-	4.5	10						1.8			
7	+	+	7.5	54						5.0			
8	-	+	7.5	33						3.5			
9	-	+	6.0	30						3.3			
10	-	-	3.8	10						1.8			
11	-	+	3.3	10						1.8			
12	+	+	4.5	20						2.1			
13	+	+	6.5	12						1.2			
14	-	-	5.5	30						3.3			
15	-	+	5.0	30						3.3			
16	+	+	5.5	20						2.1			
17	+	-	6.5	10						1.8			

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

TABLE 4

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR TARGET GROUP D CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	6.5	42						4.0			
2	-	+	8.5	31						5.0			
3	-	+	7.5	31						5.0			
4	+	+	8.5	42						5.0			
5	+	+	6.0	31						3.6			
6	+	+	6.0	32						4.0			
7	+	+	7.5	51						5.0			
8	-	-	6.5	41						5.0			
9	-	+	4.1	31						5.0			
10	+	-	5.5	32						1.5			
11	-	-	5.0	12						1.5			
12	+	+	8.5	50						5.0			
13	-	-	6.5	30						4.0			
14	+	+	7.5	40						5.0			
15	+	+	7.5	50						5.0			
16	+	+	5.5	12						1.5			
17	+	+	7.5	31						3.3			
18	+	+	6.5	41						4.0			

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

was when school closed in the Spring. Adjustment for growth or losses over the summer comes later after testing and classroom observation.

An abbreviated anecdotal record or compiled observations of significant people involved with the child was given in column thirteen.

The final column indicated the group where communication skills instruction occurred. This was a flexible placement and some students were in more than one group throughout the year.

CHAPTER III

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES

The task force, the teachers, the principal, and this director of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program deliberated with some intensity over a period of time before arriving at the terminal performance objectives for the children.

Student growth in communication skills was the single most important goal. A reliable and valid assessment of this growth could not be over emphasized. Most of the elements of any program--the teaching procedures, the grouping practices, the curriculum structure, and even teacher capabilities--are evaluated on the basis of student growth.

Farr states that research in assessing growth has been sparse, and this in itself has been a major obstacle to improving evaluation procedures including determining reasonable objectives for children.

Two main categories were determined as areas to effect student growth in communication skills: (1) improvement of skills, and (2) maintenance of skills. The maintenance of skills component was included to determine if the performance outcomes in skill growth indicated at the end of one school year were still a part of the student's skills to continue progress at the beginning of the next school year.

The utilization of materials on hand was a goal met by using the Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS) and Basal Placement as evaluation tools for the objectives. These individual scores and Basal Placement, Fall 1978, were the pretest scores.

These scores plus a summary of the observations from the Checklists for Teachers and Parents regarding the undeveloped potential of the child were part of the baseline data for predicting growth for the target groups.

The one other quantity to determine potential was use of the Spache Listening (Potential) test. This is an individually administered test of cognition through listening to the examiner read aloud passages of graduated difficulty. The child answers questions designed at different levels in the cognative domain. This test ranges from grade equivalent scores of 1.6 to 8.5. The proximity of actual grade placement and the Spache score was an indicator of how well the child was performing. A score beyond actual grade placement would suggest potential beyond the grade, too. For example, a third grade child tested in October, actual grade placement (agp) of 3.2, who scored 5.2 would have the potential of achieving at least two years beyond his actual grade placement at that time.

Individual objectives for each child based on this concrete and empirical data to assess potential were determined.

These predicted TERS scores and Predicted Basal Placement for Fall 1979 were individual terminal performance objectives for each child. See tables 5 and 6, pages 26 and 27, for Target Children of Group B and Group D.

Two grades and two groups of children at different levels and stages of development suggested efficiency in treating as grade level groups for the teachers' benefit. There were two target groups of children. Target Group B was fourth grade children with two out of seventeen or 12 percent performing on or above grade level. Target Group D was sixth grade children with none of the eighteen performing on or above grade level.

Although "grade level" may not be an appropriate goal for an individual student and his potential, it was a measure understood and accepted by educators as an ideal goal for a class grouping. Therefore it was one other effective measure for comparison. Many teachers still teach as if every child were on "grade level" performance.

The time that a gain in skills and growth occurred was considered valuable knowledge for setting future objectives for children. Therefore, a comparison of the individually predicted TERS score and when it was reached was deemed an appropriate measure.

TABLE 5

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR TARGET GROUP B CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	5.5	21				39	4.0	2.7			
2	+	+	5.5	21				31	3.3	2.1			
3	+	+	4.5	12				30	3.0	1.2			
4	+	+	6.5	54				65	6.5	5.0			
5	-	+	3.8	23				30	3.0	2.8			
6	+	-	4.5	10				28	3.0	1.8			
7	+	+	7.5	54				60	6.0	5.0			
8	-	+	7.5	33				40	4.0	3.5			
9	-	+	6.0	30				38	3.8	3.3			
10	-	-	3.8	10				25	2.8	1.8			
11	-	+	3.3	10				30	3.0	1.8			
12	+	+	4.5	20				38	3.8	2.1			
13	+	+	6.5	12				40	4.0	1.2			
14	-	-	5.5	30				39	4.0	3.3			
15	-	+	5.0	30				40	4.0	3.3			
16	+	+	5.5	20				39	4.0	2.1			
17	+	-	6.5	10				30	3.0	1.8			

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

TABLE 6

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR TARGET GROUP D CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	6.5	42				52	5.0	4.0			
2	-	+	8.5	31				51	6.0	5.0			
3	-	+	7.5	31				47	5.8	5.0			
4	+	+	8.5	42				50	5.8	5.0			
5	+	+	6.0	31				52	6.0	3.6			
6	+	+	6.0	32				40	5.0	4.0			
7	+	+	7.5	51				60	6.0	5.0			
8	-	-	6.5	41				50	5.7	5.0			
9	-	+	4.1	31				40	4.5	5.0			
10	+	-	5.5	32				40	3.7	1.5			
11	-	-	5.0	12				21	2.5	1.5			
12	+	+	8.5	50				65	7.0	5.0			
13	-	-	6.5	30				50	5.0	4.0			
14	+	+	7.5	40				50	5.0	5.0			
15	+	+	7.5	50				70	7.0	5.0			
16	+	+	5.5	12				40	4.0	1.5			
17	+	+	7.5	31				50	5.0	3.3			
18	+	+	6.5	41				55	5.0	4.0			

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

The skills improvement objectives were:

Objective #1: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B having been exposed to the Eclectic Communication Skills Program, will increase their mastery by 50 percent on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between Fall 1978 TERS scores and Spring 1979 TERS scores.

Objective #2: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B, having been exposed to the Eclectic Communications Skills Program, will achieve a gain of 1.0 grade equivalent scores in years and months for their basal reader placement. Comparison will be between Fall 1978 and Spring 1979 basal placement.

Objective #3: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group B students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve a predicted increase in growth on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison is to be made between predicted achievement as indicated on the Student Data Form (table 5, page 26) and obtained achievement, Fall 1979.

Objective #4: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group B students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve an individually predicted increase in the level of basal placement. Comparison will be made between predicted basal placement for each student for Fall 1979 and achieved basal placement.

Objective #5: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D having been exposed to the Eclectic Communications Skills Program will increase their mastery by 50 percent on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between Fall 1978 TERS scores and Spring 1979 TERS scores.

Objective #6: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D, having been exposed to the Eclectic Communications Skills Program, will achieve a gain of 1.0 grade equivalent scores in years and months for their basal reader placement. Comparison will be between Fall 1978 and Spring 1979 basal placement.

Objective #7: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group D students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve a predicted increase in growth on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between predicted achievement as indicated on the Student Data Form (table 6, page 27) and obtained achievement, Fall 1979.

Objective #8: Seventy-five percent of the targeted Group D students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve an individually predicted increase in the level of basal placement. Comparison will be made between predicted basal placement for Fall 1979 and achieved basal placement.

The maintenance of skills objectives were:

Objective #9: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B, having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program will maintain their mastery as measured on the Test of Essential Reading Skills without formal instruction. Comparison will be made between Spring 1979 and Fall 1979 TERS scores.

Objective #10: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program will maintain their mastery as measured on the Test of Essential Reading Skills without formal instruction. Comparison will be made between Spring 1979 and Fall 1979 TERS scores.

Objective #11: Seventy-five percent of the target children from Group B, having been exposed to one year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and one six-week session of formal instruction in summer school, will demonstrate maintenance or an increase in skills. Comparison is to be made between Spring-Summer, Summer-Fall, and Spring-Fall 1979 TERS scores.

Objective #12: Seventy-five percent of children from Group D, having been exposed to one year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and one six-week session of formal instruction in summer school, will demonstrate maintenance or an increase in skills. Comparison is to be made between Spring-Summer, Summer-Fall, and Spring-Fall TERS scores.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE AND RESEARCH TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE STRATEGY FOR A COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM

Review of Literature

Marion Monroe pioneered research in communication skills with her outstanding study, Children Who Cannot Read, published in 1932 by the University of Chicago Press.

In her book Language, Reading and the Communication Process, published in 1971, she offered another outstanding contribution with her overview of the development and interaction of the strands of the communicating process in children:

> Children are social creatures, and their language has a purpose. They want to communicate with others, to make known their needs, to share experiences, and to participate in the activities of their families and friends. Children are also curious, imitative, and playful. They play with words and sounds. They are delighted with rhymes, jingles, and alliteration.
>
> The language children bring to school reflects the poverty or richness of their environment, the width and breadth of their experiences, and the concepts they have developed in their contacts with others. The excellence of their language depends upon the quality of the verbal interactions within their environment. Language develops through social contacts. It follows that children who have not developed happy relationships with other children of their own age may be handicapped in their progress in language. A teacher who fosters language in the kindergarten, therefore, sets the stage for developing good social-emotional adjustments. It

is not surprising that in a classroom of children who have just entered kindergarten there is a wide range of individual differences in both the quality and quantity of the oral language brought to school.

Sooner or later in the child's early life he makes an important discovery. He finds that there is another system of language that is closely related to the one he hears and speaks. He discovers visual language, the printed and written symbols for oral language. When he sees others reading and writing and when he listens to stories read to him, he becomes curious about print and wants to learn to read and write by himself. He may not have discovered that print stands for language before coming to school, however, if his home is devoid of books and no one has ever read to him.

Communication by language is a four-lane bridge between communicants over which ideas are interchanged. The four lanes are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Grammar is the road bed upon which each lane is built. All verbal skills use about the same grammatical arrangements of words in sentences, although oral language is more abbreviated and informal than written language. Only the neuro-physiological mechanisms shift when the lanes are changed. The sensory and motor pathways used by an individual depend upon the purpose and mode of communication.

The various communication skills, although related to one another are not acquired at the same time nor at the same level of proficiency. Oral language is acquired first. Children react meaningfully to words they hear before they begin to speak the words. Then listening and speaking grow together. Poor development or oral language is a frequent cause of difficulty in learning to read and write. Many children show an uneven development of oral language skills. There are good talkers but poor listeners, little chatterboxes who talk fluently and incessantly but seldom listen to others. On the other hand, there are good listeners who do not express ideas well orally. And there are children who fail to learn to read or write in spite of excellent abilities in oral language because of difficulty in the visual, motor, and associative skills required in reading. Progress in learning to read and write also takes place at different rates and in different sequences with various individuals. Some children learn to read easily but have trouble in writing and spelling. Others seem to learn to recognize words only when

> they spell out or sound out the letters. Some children develop beautiful handwriting but cannot produce well-organized sentences or paragraphs. Teachers recognize many cases of uneven development in all the language skills which persist among pupils at every grade level.
>
> In many situations both at home and at school an individual changes rapidly from one language skill to another. In a conversation or discussion he shifts from listening to speaking, back and forth. After the class has read a story, the children may shift from reading to discussion.
>
> An upper-grade pupil may search in reference material for the facts he needs in an assignment. He may take written notes and then speak from the notes as he reports his finding to the class. Children who watch television programs often shift between listening and reading when a commercial package is exhibited showing the trade name while the announcer discusses its uses. The entire gamut of communication skills is so interrelated that it seems economical of time and a very natural procedure to teach them together, stressing one skill or another as needed.[1]

Cohen and Stern support Monroe and elaborate on her theme of how children learn and what information teachers need to determine effective instruction. This 1978 edition of their book extends one's understanding:

> How do we recognize that a child is a learning child? And just as important, how do we determine that a child is having difficulties understanding what the world and reality are all about? . . .
>
> The most direct and obvious way to find out what children know is to listen closely to what they say . . .
>
> . . . Through listening to what children say to each other and to adults, teachers can learn not only what they know or misunderstand, but what their thinking is like. During the early years children's involvement in the *process of thinking* is of greater

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[1] Marion Monroe, "The Child and His Language Come to School," in Language, Reading and the Communication Process, edited by Carl Braun (Newark: International Reading Association, 1971), p. 123.

> more far reaching effect than whether they know a great many right answers to adult questions. . . .
>
> Children's language, while important, is not however, the only clue to their thinking processes and understanding. For some children it is not even the major clue. So much of young children's thinking is done with their bodies that it is possible, in many instances, to deduce the thinking process directly from their behavior. One can see curiosity in their eyes and faces . . . one can see when they are destracted or are making random, empty gestures that lead nowhere. Learning is an ac-ive process in early childhood, and it is through a child's activity that one can see quite clearly the presence or absence of investment, struggle, purposefulness, and organization, all elements of thinking.[1]

Roger Farr makes three necessary observations for planning a communication skill program:

> Most of the reported studies have discovered that teacher ratings are relatively good predictors when compared with other measurement procedures.[2]
>
> Several authors have examined the most common method of determining growth for retarded readers--the method involves subtracting pre-test scores from post-test scores and using these as evidence of progress . . . finding differences between reading potential and reading achievement levels (potential-achievement gaps) at the beginning and end of a remedial program is another way. . . . The improvement shown by pre- and post-test comparison was about equivalent to what might be expected for normal readers . . . the potential-achievement gap differences did not show as significant improvement as the other two methods.[3]

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[1] Dorothy Cohen and Virginia Stern, Observing and Recording the Behavior of Young Children, 2d ed. (New York: Teacher's College Press, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1978), pp. 105, 107, 109.

[2] Roger Farr, Reading: What Can Be Measured? (Newark, Dela.: International Reading Association, 1969), p. 159.

[3] Ibid., p. 151.

> Factors cited by students as to why they were slow readers in order of importance: day dreaming, word by word reading, vocalizing, and monotonous plodding.
>
> If a student is able to identify his own deficiencies he should then make greater improvements in those areas which he has specified as being weak.[1]

One main conclusion was evident in every study and book written about educational development. It was succinctly presented by one expert when he emphasized that the teacher using the method is far more important than the method used. Harris echoed the same concept by suggesting that the personality of the teacher and his ability to enlist each child's active cooperation are more important than the specific method used.[2]

The framework for the program was derived from a school Handbook from Prince George's County, Maryland, brought by a parent, a member of the task force:

> The instructional program of the pupil depends on the areas in which he has particular difficulty. As the child progresses, his program should be evaluated and revised.
>
> When reading teachers are planning their instructional programs, they must consider that reading ability depends on the pupil's overall skill in language. It is essential that the four skills of communication--listening, speaking, reading, and writing--be emphasized in the reading program.[3]

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 110-11.

[2] Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, 4th ed., rev. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1966), p. 190.

[3] The Reading Resource Program, 1969 ed. (Upper Marlboro,Md.: Prince George's County Board of Education), p. 15.

Research by Program Director and Staff

On Monday, April 10, 1978, the Communication Skills Task Force was appointed from the staff and community. Plans were made for all school personnel and volunteers to conduct a self-assessment of their skills and abilities in the development of communication skills. The Task Force was to assess school resources and facilities and make a report of their findings on Friday, May 19.

Programs in McKinley Elementary: Past and Present

How to improve communication skills was a question answered by reviewing past approaches and attitudes to teach communication skills in McKinley.

Past: The Exemplary Reading Program

One teacher had had the opportunity to use the program and materials developed by Dr. Ethna Reid in the Exemplary Reading Center for Reading Instruction in Salt Lake City, Utah. The previous school year (1977-78) her reports plus student growth in previous years had been compared. The Exemplary Reading Program appeared to be a highly structured system dependent upon complete individualization of language arts instruction. Dr. Reid, in a workshop at Region X Service Center, described the program as "a total language approach involving oral reports, reading, writing, spelling, penmanship, etc. Through a variety of materials teachers provide constant stimuli change."

The teacher at McKinley who attended a workshop and a seminar in preparation for implementing the Exemplary Reading Program also traveled to another community to see it in action. Her report was that it was very demanding. She appeared almost "driven" with trying to prepare and teach the small sequential steps required for each student. Her exhaustion and the insignificant gains of the students was discouraging to adopt the total program. Although the Exemplary Reading Program could be labeled a program for effective communication skill development it did not appear appropriate in toto for this program. Restraints of structure, time, teacher training, and student growth limited its usefulness for the needs of this program by itself. Miss Rockwell, the McKinley teacher, shared her insights in the development of the eclectic approach this program took.

Present: The Basal Reading Program

The Task Force investigated the current and traditional program in the Spring of 1978. They discovered that the foundation for the development of communication skills in today's school system was still the basal reader program. The materials in a basal series were carefully systemized, utilizing a series of books, workbooks, tests, and reading aids for each grade or reading level. These were carefully regulated methods. Vocabulary was controlled and lesson plans and suggestions for supplemental activities were explained in the teachers manual. Different basal series stressed different approaches to teaching reading. Practically all basal series did strive to offer opportunities for the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The Houghton-Mifflin Readers, the basal program adopted by Texas incorporated these elements.

Task Force members had decided that in the large urban metroplex of Dallas there were many developmental programs available in DISD as well as other school districts. A plan to visit some of these programs by Task Force members, school staff, and members of the community was implemented between Wednesday, April 12 to Wednesday, May 10. Substitute teachers to permit visits to other school programs during class time were paid from the school activity fund. The Appendix offers five charts (A through E) that some members used to review the programs they visited.

Results of a visit to a suburban Slingerland Program. Two affluent suburbs of Dallas, mainly Anglo, had cooperated to present a communication skills program, Slingerland, based on the work of Anna Gillingham and Sally Childs. This was a highly structured program, also. Its authors and implementors referred to it as a multi-sensory program. A Slingerland teacher who was visited reported that "the Slingerland method has a strong phonics base that is developed through saying the phoneme element as the student writes it in the air using the large muscles."

The student and/or teacher wrote the phoneme/grapheme on the chalkboard or newsprint as he/she/they said it. The purpose was to use as many sensory avenues as possible at one time. The premise was that the more senses utilized in learning the more effective and easy learning would be.

Two observations were made during the visit to the suburban schools:

(1) All students were practicing the same element of phonics at the same time and the same way. Some students had demonstrated use and knowledge of the element in a previous spelling lesson. Some students had difficulty coordinating the behaviors of speaking, writing, listening, and tracing at the same time.

(2) Spelling errors appeared to be mainly a result of applying over-learned phonic generalizations to the English language that is irregular in its phonic application.

The decision was made to adapt some elements of the Slingerland-Gillingham Multisensory program. The keyword charts and "red flag words" could be useful for classroom bulletin boards.

Individual ditto sheets with these elements on them were used with individual students who could profit from them. This was that group of students who needed "the fences built" that much structure offered. Those students who appeared to be unable to direct their own learning because of immature development or for some reason needed a directed and controlled instructional program were offered a modified Slingerland program. This program was not for those students in our targeted group who were identified as (1) having limited auditory discrimination ability, (2) came from a home with a bilingual or bidialectal language base, or (3) demonstrated a facility with language elements in groups such as words, phrases, or sentences.

Results of a visit to a Language Experience Program in an Inner City School. Perhaps the other extreme of this continuum was in action at a different school district. This group of schools served mainly all black students. A court order permitted experimentation and offered extensive resources to develop communication skills of its students. Kenneth Goodman had been a visiting lecturer to the staff of these schools. Dr. Goodman's theorem was that "teachers be taught to accept the dialect reading of materials written in standard English and the language experience method which calls on the teacher's ability to accurately hear and record the child's own language."[1]

> The "divergent speaker" is the term given by Goodman to the child who speaks a dialect different from that which the school, text, or teacher treats as standard. Goodman puts forth the following hypothesis: "The more divergence there is between

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[1] James L. Laffey and Roger Shuy, Language Differences: Do They Interfere (Newark: International Reading Association, 1973), p. 12.

> the dialect of the learner and the dialect of learning, the more difficult will be the task of learning to read." Language divergence or linguistic difference is currently being investigated by many linguists and educators as a causal factor in reading failure among economically disadvantaged children.[1]

Two observations were made during the visit to this program:

(1) Non-dialect speaking teachers were not always able to accept and/or understand dialect adequately to hear and record the child's own language.

(2) An over abundance of language-experience activities appeared to reinforce the very element of non-standard language structure. Non-standard language structure is believed to interfere with the learning of the communication skills essential for success in the socioeconomic world of standard English. In one particular school there also appeared to be a lack of teacher models for standard English.

From these observations, for the benefit of this program, it was determined:

(1) There was a need for teachers to be aware of themselves as models for the communication skills.

(2) Development of oral language skills was essential for the successful implementation of any communication skills program.

---

[1] Dorothy Strickland, "Expanding Language Power of Young Black Children: A Literature Approach" in Better Reading in Urban Schools, edited by J. Allen Figurel (Newark: International Reading Association, 1972), p. 9.

(3) An eclectic approach appeared more appropriate for instruction of individual students than one "pure" program.

The language-experience approach of using a child's language as the framework for beginning instruction offered opportunities for those groups of students (1) who had a reasonably adequate foundation in verbalizing and interacting orally, (2) who needed positive attention to be motivated to risk and exert effort in learning, and (3) who had these needs and could be instructed by teachers willing and able to learn and adapt to language/communication differences. These characteristics were more prevalent with some McKinley students than any others.

Results of a visit to a Reading Lab using Programmed Instruction. During a visit to another school,Programmed Instruction, with reading materials prepared by Cynthia Dee Buchanan and Sullivan Associates for Webster Division of McGraw-Hill, was reviewed in a laboratory setting. Programmed Instruction appeared to have merit for those students who could work on their own for short periods of time with immediate reinforcement. It was limiting for those students who needed personal attention. It was also limiting in that an instructor did not know until a unit test how successful the investment of student time had been in learning. Quick interest in the material that in a short time turned to boredom was observed in some students. At McKinley Elementary this tool was offered to reinforce linguistic and phonetic practice with that group of students who needed a visual tactile mode of learning as determined from teacher records and reports. These were some of the same students with limited auditory discrimination.

Results of an investigation into the needs and abilities of Spanish surnamed students. As reported earlier, a growing minority of students at McKinley was Mexican-American. A report of the National Advisory Committee on Mexican-American education, The Mexican American: Quest for Equality, (from the Southwestern Cooperative Educational Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968) warned that in Texas 89 percent of children with Spanish surnames who start school do not complete twelfth grade. This high rate of failure was substantiated in numerous studies. "There are approximately 5 million non-English speaking school age children in the United States, of whom at least 80 percent speak Spanish."[1] The question had to be answered, how can one read in a language he can barely understand, let alone speak? It was learned that foreign language interfered in the acquisition of decoding skills. The Task Force reported that the phonic approach was based on the assumption that the child can (1) hear the sounds of the language, (2) recognize each of the letters, and (3) learn to associate each sound with one or a combination of letters. Yet educators know that most six year olds have difficulty with these skills. The Mexican-American student with a Spanish speaking background and home language had tremendous interferences. A summary of literature and research about this problem was reported:

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[1] Roger W. Shuy, "Non Standard Dialect Problems: An Overview," in Language Differences: Do They Interfere? edited by James L. Laffey and Roger Shuy (Newark: International Reading Association, 1973), p. 29.

> How does the use of a foreign language interfere with the acquisition of reading skills? In every way. First of all, the learner can understand only the most rudimentary type of instruction when his teacher speaks in a foreign language. His acquisition of the decoding skills is greatly hampered because he cannot hear many of the sounds and words of the foreign language; he cannot perceive the letters and visual configurations by which the words are represented; and he seldom can link the sounds and the symbols meaningfully. What he learns he learns by rote. The lack of vocabulary and non-mastery of grammatical structures greatly impede his comprehension of what he does read. All of this gives rise to strong feelings of frustration and often of failure, feelings which only serve to further impede the acquisition of reading skills and which tend to alienate the child from school.[1]

A survey was made using the Primary Acquisition of Language (PAL) test. The PAL test was an element of a dual language program developed by El Paso schools. The test was used to determine language preference and strengths and weaknesses of those students with Spanish surnames. Of the targeted group to receive instruction in developing communication skills, six students were reported as needing help with English language communication skills, although they did not qualify for the Bilingual Program. The literature stated that parental reaction to language interference or instruction for those students who come from Spanish surnamed families was inconsistent and unpredictable. It was also a volatile and emotion laden issue. This had been born out in the experience of administrators of McKinley Elementary. Indeed, the Bilingual Program or English as a Second Language was rife with problems in this school district and the nation.

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[1] Nancy Modiano, "Juanito's Reading Problems: Foreign Language Interference and Reading Skill Acquisition," in Language Differences: Do They Interfere?, edited by James L. Laffey and Roger Shuy (Newark: International Reading Association, 1973), p. 35.

In the review of literature and the research to develop the strategy for this program the philosophy presented in the DISD Communications Baseline was adapted as the foundation for instruction for students and staff development for teachers:

> All human beings are born into specific cultural environments, characterized by distinct speech patterns, usage, and vocabulary. These become the natural language of children--often rich, descriptive, and forceful. Frequently, however, the natural language of children may be different from the medium of the classroom. As a first responsibility, it is essential that teachers do not allow these differences to block students' learning or to damage the way they feel about themselves.
>
> The school has the further task and responsibility to provide children with the opportunity to learn and to use a standard dialect of English so that they may meet with assurance whatever oral language demands they may encounter in social and career situations. It is understood that all language can be appropriate, depending on the situation (purpose and audience) in which it is used.[1]

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[1] _Communications, K-12 Baseline The Student as a Communicator_ (Dallas: Dallas Independent School District, 1978), p. 19.

Compiling the Results and Reporting Responses

The week-end that began Friday, May 19, 1978, saw almost a continuous meeting of the Task Force at the author-director's home. The findings of the visits to the various schools and programs, the self-assessments by the McKinley personnel, the inventory and investigation of materials and resources were all compiled. The cumulative records and reports of the students' performance had been reviewed and the summary discussed with the Director of Research and Evaluation. The need and the assets and liabilities to meet that need were available and the Task Force compiled the results into a report that was presented to the faculty on Thursday, May 25. In this meeting goals were established for the students, the faculty, the program, and the community for a communication skills program.

These goals and the outcome of the local meeting were reported the following Friday to Central Staff and approval obtained from the Area Director to proceed with the program.

The Task Force was charged with developing the strategy for the Communication Skills Program and was paid out of the elementary department budget to develop specific tactics the month after school was out in May. On June 23, 1978, the final details were approved by the principal and Area Administrator.

CHAPTER V

THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF AN ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM

Definition and Description of an Eclectic Program

Eclecticism generally is defined as "the selection and orderly combination of compatible features from diverse sources," the combination of valid elements from various theories into a harmonious whole.

An eclectic strategy combined different materials and different tactics according to a teacher's perception of student needs. Whatever was selected the total strategy was highly dependent on the use of basal readers.

Few teachers could state that the strategy they were using was systematic and an orderly synthesis of data from various theories and considerations. Thus the Task Force proposed eclecticism for the *teacher* that encouraged him to select from a variety of strategies, that one or that combination of strategies that best met the need of the child.

The Rationale for Eclecticism

The eclectic strategy was the one most often recommended by master teachers and teacher training institutions. It made sense because: (1) children do in fact learn through a variety of strategies and tactics, (2) children are different, and (3) teachers are different.

Eclecticism was based on the theory that until it was possible to standardize youth, it seemed unwise to standardize learning strategy. Because of individual differences there was a need for a variety of strategies for children and teachers.

Moreover, an eclectic strategy met another criteria established by the Task Force. That criteria was to use the resources at hand. There were Title I materials available at McKinley but *every* school had a basal reading program. Using the basal reading program in an eclectic way increased the opportunity of having the program adopted and institutionalized later on a wider scale.

Tactics and Materials Selected for an Eclectic Strategy

Tactics and materials selected from programs visited in other schools

The Language Experience approach. The Language Experience approach was stated concisely by R. V. Allen in the words of a child:

> What I can think about, I can talk about.
>
> What I can say, I can write (or someone can write for me).
>
> What I can write, I can read.
>
> I can read what others write for me to read.

In this approach no distinction was made between the communication strands of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Equal emphasis was placed upon all these skills as each led into, facilitated, and reinforced the other. This approach was appropriate for a population of divergent language facility and relatively low literacy. It was important to elaborate the techniques and tactics of Language Experience to the faculty. It was equally important to warn against abuse and over use of a program dependent on a child's thinking. The Language Experience approach complemented the basal reader program as the foundation of the eclectic strategy. It was most successful with the black and Mexican-American students. Especially helpful to the success of the program were volunteers or aides who helped write, type, or tape the children's stories.

The Exemplary Reading Program. Certain tactics and materials of the Exemplary Reading Program (ERP) were adopted and used for training of teachers in Staff Development. The first one of these, the breakdown of teaching into certain sequential steps, found a correlation in method in Slingerland with only a little less structure. Both tactics called for a set procedure in instruction from the teacher that had to be echoed in feedback from the student. The second premise, the complete individualization of language arts for *some* students was reinforced in the Language Experience approach. The theory of Language Experience is that all experiences of a child can be tools to develop language, and consequently communication skills. Thus a total individualization of language arts for a child could become concrete by offering instruction in grammar, penmanship, word recognition, comprehension, and listening using his experiences as the basis. The next tenet of ERP, pupils moving as rapidly as they master skills, was facilitated by the DISD Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS). The TERS Progress Form requires monitoring and marking progress on a continuum for this criterion referenced test.

There was mixed response to the next theorem, the use of oral reports for development of organization, speaking skills and oral language. Teachers and students liked the idea of less writing to do and grade. But teachers felt a time limitation and some students never wanted to speak in front of their classmates. This practice grew in favor with the use of volunteers, the tape recorder, and occasionally peer tutors.

The ERP Creative Writing Directives notebook was demonstrated by the teacher who had used it, and it became a framework for development of a personal notebook for some teachers.

The Slingerland Program. Three tactics of Slingerland were included in the Eclectic Communication Skills Program. Teachers learned the use of multi-sensory techniques using sandtrays, fingerpaint, "air writing," and finger tracing to develop sensory avenues. Teachers learned that some students profit from seeing, hearing, and "feeling" a phoneme/grapheme if they trace a teacher's model or write their own element as they say it.

Another detail of Slingerland that was adopted was the use of charts with Key Word, Red Flag, and Green Flag words on them. These were made available for each classroom bulletin board.

The other element of Slingerland that was adopted was the use of games that aided hand-eye coordination such as hitting or bouncing a ball, or large and small muscle development such as jumping a rope or finger exercises.

Programmed Instruction. Programmed Instruction was an effective means of individualization in that the repetition and feedback provided for better acquisition and retention of the material. But teachers had to remember not to use it for pacing only. It provided for the needs of the child only if his needs were matched to the information obtained from the data sheet. Teachers were reminded that automated instruction was not superior to individual human tutoring.

The M. W. Sullivan Reading Program from Behavioral Research Laboratories was borrowed from a non-operating DISD Reading Clinic. This program included twenty programmed texts, correlated readers of high interest/low vocabulary, and correlated tapes. The tapes provided a means of auditory presentation.

The Sullivan Programmed Readers from Buchannon and Sullivan Associates were in the library. This programmed workbook and textbook series was used as supplementary material.

Tactics and materials selected from McKinley resources and staff

The Basal Program. A careful examination of the total basal reader program (Houghton-Mifflin) by the Task Force reinforced what educators knew. Opportunities and materials were available in the *total* program for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Records, tapes, charts, plays, supplementary storybooks, and so on, all were available in a synthesized program. Teachers' manuals offered directed instruction as well as suggestions on how to develop these skills in children.

There is an accepted axiom in educational circles that "overnight change in education takes twenty years." The use of the basal program by teachers at McKinley exemplified this. Even the younger teachers were leaving their manuals on the shelf and "teaching as they had been taught." It was easier to complain about how little time there was and how much the basal program required than to get into it and use it effectively. When the principal and author had a consultant from DISD and Houghton-Mifflin demonstrate how to use the various elements in a coordinated way with one case study motivation was stimulated and the dust was blown off materials and manuals in the building. Phonic records and story tapes were ordered from the DISD warehouse at no charge to McKinley as they had been paid for from the Elementary Department Budget. The basal program was the foundation for the eclectic strategy.

Test of Essential Reading Skills (TERS). The Test of Essential Skills was a formal way of keeping track of what skills students had learned and what skills they still needed to learn.

Skills System. Teachers used TERS as a foundation for developing a Skills System. One teacher had already made a notebook listing the skills on each test level. Then she had added or combined her listed skills into a system. This provided the foundation for other teachers to develop their own skill system. There were two cautions learned from this activity. First, there was a tendency to be too refined in identifying skills with the result that too many were included. Second, the skill had to contribute in some way to improving a student's performance or it was useless (see appendix G).

Resource File. From the inventory of resources at McKinley and from the visits to other schools, a listing of materials keyed to specific skills was developed. This resource file was vitally important to the management system of an eclectic program. Teachers were surprised to discover all that was available when they began working on a resource file. When they saw all that *was* available at school they categorized everything by the skill that was stressed. Sharing and planning occurred among teachers. Equally important, many were surprised at what could be used and how few things had to be bought.

Personnel adjustment. Teacher aides and volunteers had assessed their skills and abilities and identified special areas where they could contribute. One aide who was of Mexican-American descent was shifted from primary grades to four, five, and six when the information from the questionnaires was compiled for the target group. As a neighborhood parent and paid staff worker, her contribution as liaison between the program, the community, and the Anglo teachers in dealing with the Mexican-American students was invaluable. This was one of the adjustments during the monitoring of the program on September 29.

Task Force. Appointing a Communication Skills Task Force was the method used to transfer ownership of the program to those who had to implement the program. The Task Force was chaired by the Instructional Leader with the approval and support of the principal. The Task Force consisted of the librarian, the reading demonstration teacher, representative teachers from each grade level and from special programs within the school. There was also a component from the community of three parents. The responsibilities of the Task Force were:

(1) to conduct a needs assessment of personnel, resources, and facilities

(2) to consult with Research and Evaluation to help identify the target group and evaluate the program

(3) to schedule visits to other schools and programs

(4) to develop a detailed communication skills program

(5) to monitor, compile, and report findings of all assessments and investigations.

Teachers. The major responsibility of implementing the strategy of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program belonged to the teacher. This author-director believed it was vital for them to feel that the project was not another job added to their burgeoning work load by Central Office. They elected their own representatives to the Task Force. They had the option to choose whether to visit other schools and programs or not, and four chose not to go. An intense effort was made to listen carefully and to weigh their opinions and reactions. Indeed, one of the formative evaluation processes was the evaluation and exchange of ideas, informally in the lounge and lunchroom, as well as the meetings designated for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation.

Mechanics of the Instructional Program

The communication skills program was offered as a total school opportunity although there was a targeted group of students identified to measure its success. Team teaching and flexible grouping were two main ingredients contributing to its success.

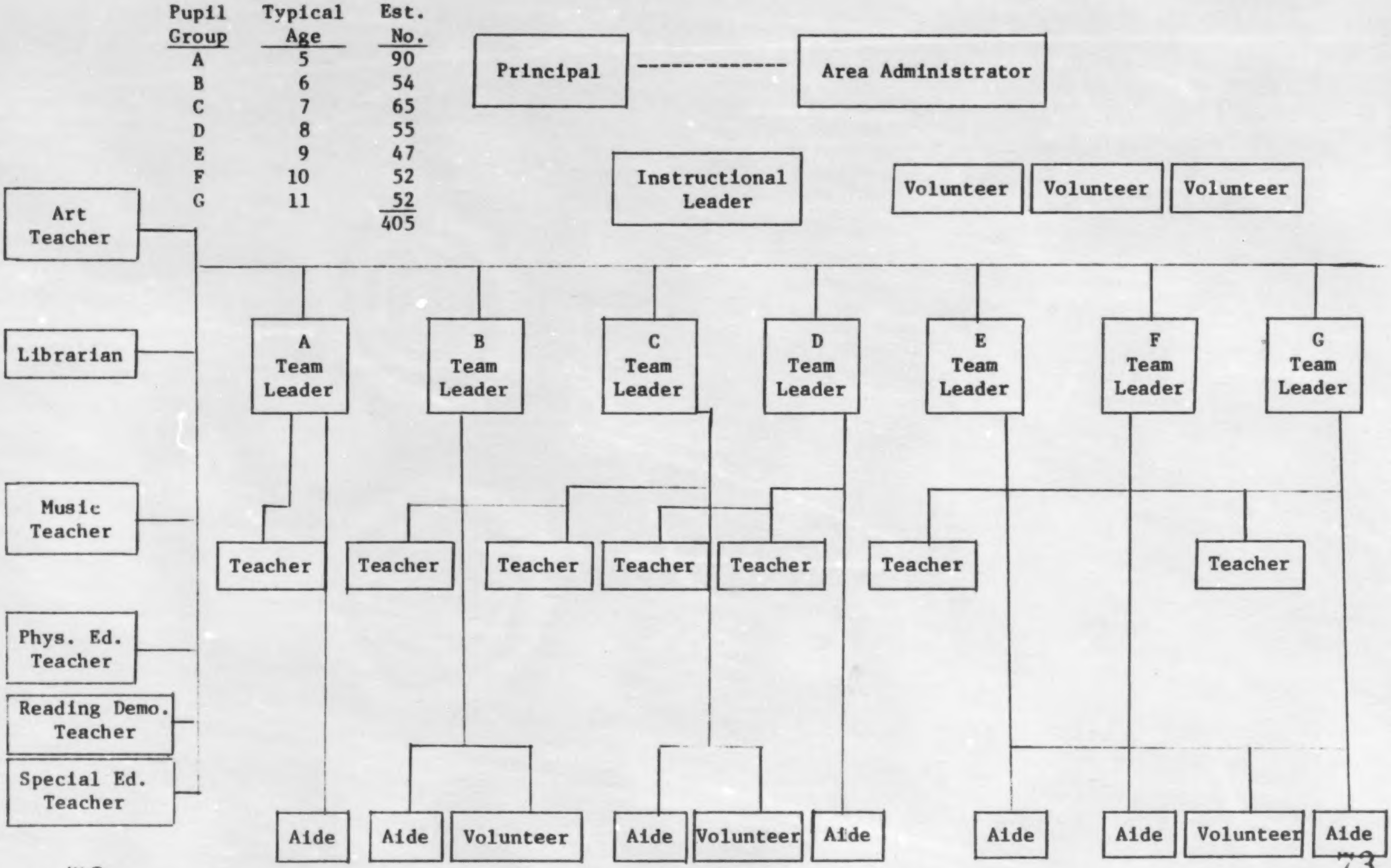
The essential feature of the program was unbroken continuity in the educational development of the child regardless of his rate of intellectual growth. The emphasis was on the individual child moving from one skill unit of instruction as identified as needed by him according to the TERS progress form, the data sheet, and other records. He mastered each skill at a level permitted by his ability and according to his own rate of progress. The Skills Systems and TERS were the bases for the unit of instruction where a child would work. Each child had his own manila folder with his needs and program identified by his teacher.

Team teaching

The teaching team consisted of teachers who previously formed one cluster at a grade level and teacher aides (figure 3, page 57). One teacher on each team was designated leader. The team as a whole, under the leadership of the team leader, and using the management system and eclectic tactics, planned the instructional activities.

From 2:50-3:30 on Mondays and Thursdays, the teams at the primary level met to review instructional activities planned for that week. On Tuesdays and Fridays the teams at the intermediate level met. When these teachers were meeting their students had an appropriate program planned by the principal and implemented in the cafeteria, auditorium, or film room.

Figure 3. McKinley School Staff


Principal
Area Administrator
Instructional Leader
Volunteer
Volunteer
Volunteer
Art Teacher
Librarian
Music Teacher
Phys. Ed. Teacher
Reading Demo. Teacher
Special Ed. Teacher
A Team Leader
B Team Leader
C Team Leader
D Team Leader
E Team Leader
F Team Leader
G Team Leader
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Aide
Aide
Volunteer
Aide
Volunteer
Aide
Aide
Aide
Volunteer
Aide

Pupil Group	Typical Age	Est. No.
A	5	90
B	6	54
C	7	65
D	8	55
E	9	47
F	10	52
G	11	52
		405

At first, one half day each month was set aside for discussion by the team of the progress being made by the children and of any particular problems. This half day was also used to plan instructional activities. It was soon discovered that this was not enough time to monitor, evaluate, and plan; therefore, on October 4 the schedule was changed to the first and fourth Wednesday of each month.

During this half day the children were in meetings for various types of activities of special interest or those growing out of their classroom experiences. These activities were planned by the special teachers--teachers of music, art, and physical education--in a team with the principal as team leader and the librarian as the coordinator. Interested and competent parents and/or members of community civic groups through Special Programs for Additional Resources of Knowledge (SPARK) conducted these activities. SPARK is part of the Volunteer Department of DISD.

The coordination of the entire school's instructional program was the responsibility of the principal and this author. These two educators also had the responsibility for assisting the teachers and teacher aides in their professional growth.

Grouping

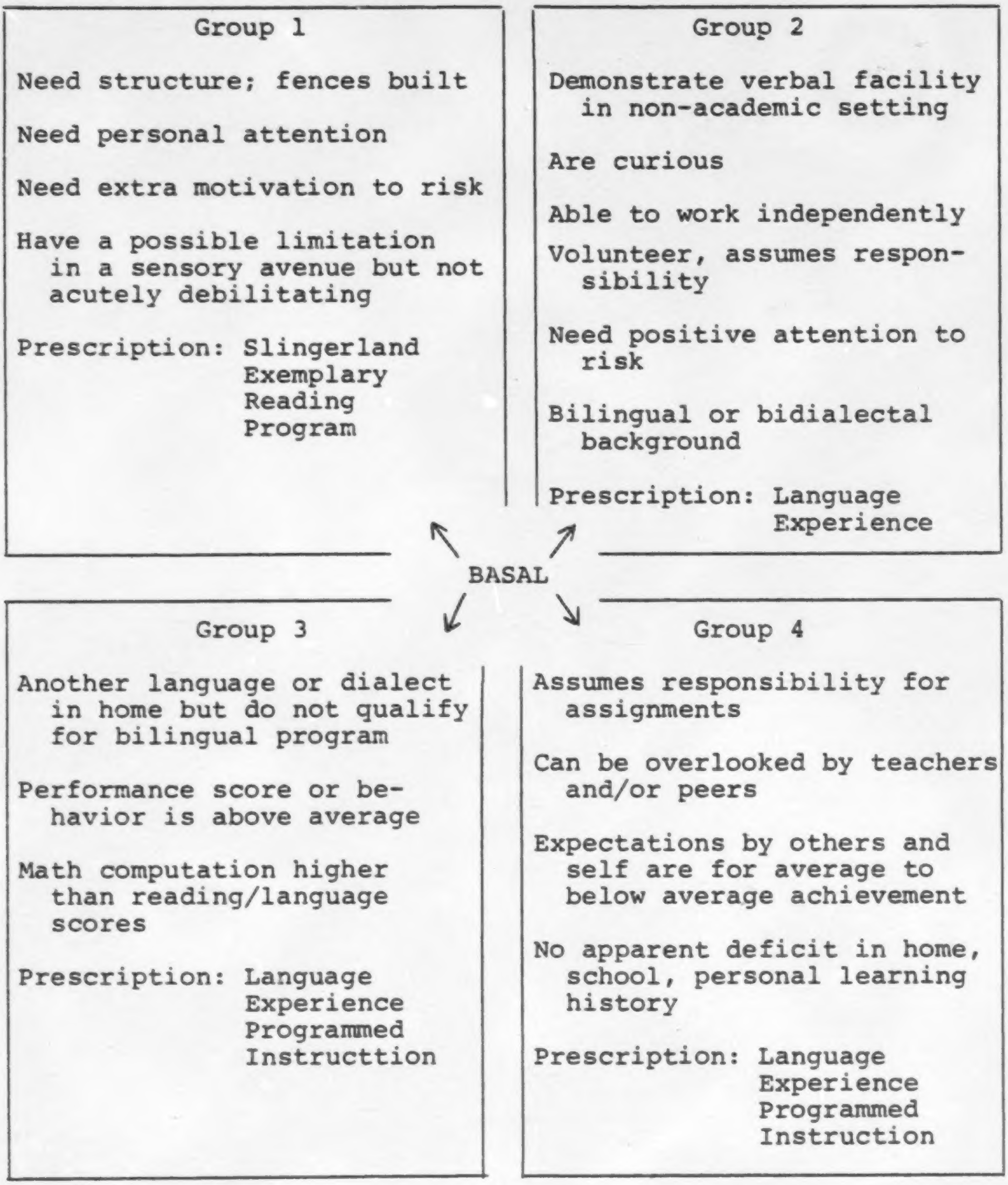
Generally an effort was made to group children by (1) their skill needs, (2) their level of mastery, and (3) the sensory avenue or mode of learning most effective for the individual child. One must remember no rigid criteria can be successfully established because of the uniqueness of each human being but these characteristics were identified and categorized as groups. Responses to Observation Checklists by teachers and parents were used to identify the behavior traits and classify the children into groups. Rarely would one child in any one group have all the characteristics identified for his group. Likewise, the characteristics and prescriptions existed and were used in different degrees and intensities at different times (figure 4, page 60).

Flexibility and group size were important goals to maintain. Small groups (six to ten children) proved to be economical and have psychological advantages for teacher and student. Groups of two to twenty could function with the aid of volunteers, aides, or peer tutoring, depending on the instructional skill and rate of learning of the student.

Six children in Group D (#2, 3, 8, 9, 13, 14) were placed in basal readers too difficult for them at the beginning of the 1978 school year. This was not an unusual problem to discover. It is one example of what can occur in the loss of skills over the summer. Children are generally placed in that basal in September that was indicated by their scores and placement when school closed in May.

Although these children were regrouped for reading level last year (1978), two of them (#8, 9) have started this year (Fall 1979) at what appears to be too difficult a level.

Figure 4. One pattern for flexible grouping. No one child would have any set of characteristics exclusively nor be limited to only the prescription indicated. Children could be in two or more groups throughout the year or change as their performance changed.



Group 1

Need structure; fences built

Need personal attention

Need extra motivation to risk

Have a possible limitation in a sensory avenue but not acutely debilitating

Prescription: Slingerland Exemplary Reading Program

Group 2

Demonstrate verbal facility in non-academic setting

Are curious

Able to work independently

Volunteer, assumes responsibility

Need positive attention to risk

Bilingual or bidialectal background

Prescription: Language Experience

BASAL

Group 3

Another language or dialect in home but do not qualify for bilingual program

Performance score or behavior is above average

Math computation higher than reading/language scores

Prescription: Language Experience Programmed Instructtion

Group 4

Assumes responsibility for assignments

Can be overlooked by teachers and/or peers

Expectations by others and self are for average to below average achievement

No apparent deficit in home, school, personal learning history

Prescription: Language Experience Programmed Instruction

Regrouping is indicated but the teacher who placed them wants to wait awhile.

Just as serious was the problem of placing a student in too low a level where boredom and neglect occurred. Student #10 in Group D started Fall 1978 as a sixth grade student, reading in a first grade reader. This writer believed this reflected the way teachers viewed her personally. Her response to the Language Experience approach daily with the assistance of a volunteer three times a week was to move to the last reader of the third level by May. It is anticipated that monitoring and evaluation in September will move her to the fourth level reader. More about the effectiveness of placement and grouping on performance is reported in chapter 7.

Scheduling

Not all children needed the same intensity of treatment. Some groups made progress meeting twice a week, some did much better with three periods, some children needed daily or twice daily attention. Target group children met daily.

Research supports the concept that the time of day has relatively little effect on the learning ability of children so instruction in communication skills was scheduled as needed and feasible, and in keeping with state and DISD policy. There was a lot of trial and error in scheduling at the beginning and it took until the second six weeks period before a day went by without some crisis in grouping and scheduling.

There were teachers who absolutely wanted their *own* homeroom and their *own* schedule every day. But, eventually, with support and encouragement from administration and a degree of peer pressure from two enthusiastic teachers, there was a reasonably smooth flow. The key to this problem was not to expect too much, too soon, from teachers as well as children.

Community involvement

Currently there is a reawakening of a concept that has been a part of effective learning for any child. That is the involvement of his parent or advocate in his learning program. Although McKinley was in an economically depressed area, and illiteracy and the minority population was growing, there *was* community involvement. Sometime, in previous years, and even at the beginning of the communication skills effort, it was a negative emphasis that worked positively. A father or mother would come to school and threaten teachers, aides, or administrators if they felt their child was not learning what the parent expected. One burly father, in a dirty tee shirt and workpants, and his barefoot, pregnant wife, came menacingly one morning before school. He was not happy with his son's report card. As others hurried by, this writer tried to explain that his fifth grade son could not read. The father's only response was, "Teach 'im," and he strode away.

The parents' response to the Observation Checklist was a vital ingredient in diagnosing potential. If a parent was unable to read and write, the visiting teacher took the checklist to the child's home and completed it with the parent.

The P.T.A. Board and the Volunteer Chairperson, six people, supported the program by acting as volunteers, making teaching aids, and helping plan for district-wide school events at McKinley. The P.T.A. meeting of October 11 focused on parent's contribution to the development of communication skills by their children.

Community members who served on the Task Force were an ad hoc committee who shared the same responsibilities as other Task Force members. It was believed important to have from them a commitment to the rules for serving. Any person absent from two successive meetings or who failed to follow through with an assignment was removed, and a new member appointed in his place. These were unnecessary rules because the community members served with more consistent enthusiasm than one of the teachers. It was one of those parents who conceived the program for Texas Public School Week (March 5-9, 1979).

Four times a year visitation to the school by parents is scheduled throughout Dallas. Two times, the beginning and end of school, the purpose is to review the TERS Progress Form and plan together with the parent for the progress of his child. There are night meetings when the staff returns and school is open two weeks of the year. One week in the fall, November 13-17, 1978, American Education Week, the visitors and parents of the community were informed about the communication skills program and could see elements of it as used by their child. March 5-9, 1979, Texas Public School Week, was the time the parent who was a Task Force member suggested and developed the auditorium program. This was a program for parents about *their* needs for effective communication. The question and answer period following the program indicated success in creating new insights. One student even came to school the next day and reported his father was telling him (the son) how important it was for the husband to listen to a wife!

Staff Development

In any project it is absolutely vital to have reasonable expectations and goals. Knowing when to adjust these expectations was another asset for this program. To help teachers and the director know what was reasonable to expect from themselves, one another, and most of all, the children, the week of August 21-25, 1978 was devoted to staff development. August 3 and 4, this author completed the details, wrote letters confirming invitations to staff development leaders, and recorded the meeting on the Central Office calendar.

Two areas of skills and abilities that needed strengthening became apparent through the assessment and informal discussion. These were:

(1) How to make better use of test results in diagnosing student's potential and needs, as well as in planning instruction.

(2) What behavior changes of students and teachers were necessary to improve development of listening skills.

There were seven Fridays throughout the school year when students were released early for in-building staff development. The plan that was followed was for teachers and staff to choose as their topic either use of test results or listening skills and assume responsibility for two days for each topic for presentation for staff development. The other three days were the responsibility of the principal and this director of the program.

There was a range of responses of varying intensity when the concept was first presented because staff development, up until this time, had been the responsibility of administration. But as involvement grew so did enthusiasm and creativity. The groups secured films from the Regional Service Center and invited speakers rarely included, for instance, the sister who was the principal of the community parochial school.

Besides central staff, community leaders, and the Task Force who presented during Staff Development week in August, other successful efforts through the year were:

(1) The teacher who had training in the Exemplary Reading Program shared her knowledge and experience in a program that assumed role playing. The rest of the faculty members were the students so they used the elements of the program. This was also the day an instructor in Slingerland tactics

presented. These two highly structured programs complemented one another.

(2) A member of Research and Evaluation and a representative from Psychological Services brought group and individual test scores of McKinley students. Case studies were developed from the day of enrollment until transfer out using this data. Teachers were involved and did the work diagnosing and planning for their own students.

(3) Publishers' representatives were invited to demonstrate their materials through the Media Center. Harcourt Brace's Plays for Echo Reading, S.R.A.'s Listening Skill Builders, and Educational Developmental Laboratories' (EDL) Listening Tapes, were loaned and used throughout the year.

Tactics adopted to effect behavior changes to improve listening skills were:

(1) The first day of Staff Development, the director of the program supplied a list of suggestions copied from a book (appendix I, page 134) to adapt every day behavior for growth of listening skills.

(2) Skinnerarian tactics of reinforcing positive listening behavior by a material or non-material (praise) reward, when it occurred in informal or formal settings.

(3) Each faculty member helped create an awareness for all school personnel of behavior that had a negative effect on listening development. One example was teachers repeating immediately what the student had said. Another was that

talking too much by one person, teacher or student, tends to result in "tuning out" behavior.

CHAPTER VI

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM

Formative Evaluation

Evaluation of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program was ongoing (formative) and terminal (summative) and several types of evaluation were used during the process of the program. There was an opportunity from 2:50-3:30 each Monday and Thursday for teams at the primary level, and Tuesday and Friday for teams at the intermediate level to review instructional activities. Tactics were adapted and developed during this time according to the opinion and judgment of what was best for the children.

At first, one half day each month was set aside for discussion by the team of the progress made by the children and of any particular problems. October 4 the schedule was changed to the first and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Students who needed to be changed from one group to another as well as students needing to advance from one level to another were reviewed. Thirteen major changes among groups were made. One hundred percent of the target children advanced at least one level during the year.

Progress Forms were marked for skill mastery anytime an individual student demonstrated competence of that skill. These forms are four copy carbon. At parent conferences in the Fall parents received the top copy from the teacher. At the end of year conference the parent received the third copy of the form showing both where the child performed at the beginning of the year and new growth that occurred during the year. At the end of the school year the teacher filed the second copy of the Progress Form in the child's folder to follow him into the next school year. The fourth copy of the Progress Form was used by Research and Evaluation Department and/or by middle schools to make preliminary instructional and organizational plans for the coming year.

The other two times parents visited school besides Fall and Spring conferences to review progress were during American Education Week (November 13-17, 1978) and Texas Public School Week (March 5-9, 1979). Elements of the Communication Skills Program were on display--children's writings, letters, scripts, diaries, books, etc.--and demonstrated as "talks," reports, poetry readings, as well as tape recorded samples. The response was enthusiastic approval.

Central Office personnel and middle management personnel visited to observe, offer opinions, and judge the mechanics and content of the program. At the suggestion of one facilitator, the program was amended to permit the opportunity for small tutoring groups in the morning between the time breakfast was served and school officially began. This worked especially well for primary age children who were dropped off at school sometime before 7:30 A.M. and older intermediate children who acted as tutors. Although early-morning tutoring was never fully developed as a program it is an option being considered this year.

One Central Staff person in the Communications Department learned about the program and sent a reporter and photographer to cover the story. Another time, a photographer from the school district came and photographed students and instructors in action. These pictures were featured in a story in the Title I newspaper supplied to the school and business community. From these pictures two teachers observed a clutter of materials on the table in front of a child and in the background. This resulted in a reorganization and check-out plan for materials from the library.

The volunteer chairperson met each month with team chairpersons and volunteers to review contact hours, strengths and weaknesses of the volunteer program, and to make plans for enlistment of new volunteers. The chairperson learned of some conflicts between teachers and volunteers as well as that some volunteers had problems relating to some students. Changes were made between personnel and responsibilities and the limitations were more clearly defined. Four new volunteers were enlisted from the Army and Navy Exchange Office near the school. These four women came during release time from their offices and became an integrated part of the program. Two women took instructional materials home to study to be better prepared; one made bulletin board materials during the week; another taped children's story books for them to listen to and follow the story.

There were seven Fridays throughout the school year when children were released early for in-building staff development. These early release days were devoted to strengthening teacher skills in two areas of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program. The two areas for enhancement were (1) better use of test results, and (2) listening skills development. Listening skill development is still a frontier in communication skills, although there was more awareness and more materials than ten years ago. Teachers surveyed publisher's materials and worked with samples of tapes, records, and programs. Generally, this was for development of the Resource File. Also, a decision was made that this was an area for more investigation and development during the 1979-80 school year.

Representatives from Psychology Department and Research and Evaluation presented programs using films and individual case studies of McKinley students to improve teachers' understanding of better use of test results. As a result of these programs several students' basal programs were adjusted. Informal question and answer sessions following the presentations revealed that teachers had gained more insight into children's needs and strengths and weaknesses.

Information in this section of the report provides the reader with ample evidence that process evaluation was an ongoing part of the evaluation design and that there were many changes in operational procedures as a result.

Summative Evaluation

The Test of Essential Reading Skills and Basal Placement of the student were used to evaluate the effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the program.

The student's progress was recorded in standard scores and grade equivalent scores in years and months. Tests of Essential Reading Skills was charted as a percentage growth. The growth at each level of basal placement was charted as a grade equivalent score. It was important to note that the children started to work in that level of basal in the Fall where they ended in the Spring. Basal placement was identified as the same level at the close of school and the beginning of school the following Fall.

All of the student data came from scores at the beginning of the year, including individually administered Spache Listening (Potential) Test. An Observation Checklist for the teacher and the parent (appendices F and G) was used empirically to determine the presence of undeveloped potential. Tables 7 and 8, pages 73-76 are Student Data Forms for the Target Groups. Columns nine and ten, Predicted Fall 1979 TERS and Basal measures, are the terminal performance objectives for each child. Columns six, seven, and eight are the observed post-test TERS scores. Column twelve is the observed

TABLE 7

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR
TARGET GROUP B CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	5.5	21	29	*	41	39	4.0	2.7	4.0	Able to work independently; Spanish spoken in home	2
2	+	+	5.5	21	37	*	39	31	3.3	2.1	4.0	Frequent absences; supportive family	1
3	+	+	4.5	12	38	*	40	30	3.0	1.2	4.0	Wants to learn; shy; needs structure	1
4	+	+	6.5	54	Absent	*	60	65	6.5	5.0	6.0	Prediction to match Spache; past progress OK	4
5	-	+	3.8	23	38	Moved	-	30	3.0	2.8	-	teacher did not recommend	1
6	+	-	4.5	10	29	30	30	28	3.0	1.8	3.0	MA; Spanish spoken at home	3→2
7	+	+	7.5	54	Absent	*	60	60	6.0	5.0	6.0	High achiever; frequent absence; trouble maker	4
8	-	+	7.5	33	54	*	55	40	4.0	3.5	5.0	Previously one of better students although not on actual grade placement; thought he was average	4→2
9	-	+	6.0	30	45	*	50	38	3.8	3.3	5.0	Considered average previously; a leader among peers	3
10	-	-	3.8	10	28	*	35	25	2.8	1.8	3.0	MA; friend #6 wanted him in group; progress beyond expectations	3→2
11	-	+	3.3	10	38	45	50	30	3.0	1.8	5.0	Very low Spache; hearing loss; low expectations previously	1→4

Continued

TABLE 7, *continued*

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
12	+	+	4.5	20	50	*	40	38	3.8	2.1	4.0	Leader among peers; transferred from other district	1→2
13	+	+	6.5	12	35	40	50	40	4.0	1.2	4.0	Black; shy; responded to Language Experience	1→4→2
14	-	-	5.5	30	38	*	45	39	4.0	3.3	5.0	Average expectations; unsupportive family	4→1→4
15	-	+	5.0	30	50	45	45	40	4.0	3.3	4.0	MA; father became involved	3
16	+	+	5.5	20	38	*	39	39	4.0	2.1	4.0	Asthmatic; withdrawn	1→4
17	+	-	6.5	10	30	Moved	-	30	3.0	1.8	-	Mother was in Special Education; low expectations	1

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

* = did not attend Summer School

- = score unavailable because of absence or transfer

MA = Mexican American

TABLE 8

STUDENT DATA FORM FOR TARGET GROUP D CHILDREN

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
1	+	+	6.5	42	56	*	60	52	5.0	4.0	6.0	Quiet: withdrawn; dependent; wears glasses	4
2	-	+	8.5	31	47	*	60	51	6.0	5.0	6.0	MA; low teacher expectations	3
3	-	+	7.5	31	50	*	50	47	5.8	5.0	5.7	MA; low teacher expectations	3
4	+	+	8.5	42	60	61	61	50	5.8	5.0	6.0	Black; mature in assuming responsibilities	2
5	+	+	6.0	31	57	*	60	52	6.0	3.6	6.0	Needs structure; frequent absence record	1
6	+	+	6.0	32	51	*	57	40	5.0	4.0	6.0	Education history appropriate except has moved frequently	4
7	+	+	7.5	51	Absent	*	57	60	6.0	5.0	6.0	Leader with peers; takes initiative; babysits for mother	2
8	-	-	6.5	41	50	*	50	50	5.7	5.0	5.5	MA; dominant macho father; wants to learn	3
9	-	+	4.1	31	32	*	37	40	4.5	5.0	4.5	Loud; in trouble with teachers and peers; over expecting pressures	1
10	+	-	5.5	32	37	*	39	40	3.7	1.5	3.7	Dependent; shy; poor grades; poor handwriting; unsupporting family	4

Continued

TABLE 8, *continued*

				Test of Essential Reading Skills				Predicted Fall 1979		BASAL			
Student	Teacher	Parent	Spache	Sept. 1978	May 1979	July 1979	Sept. 1979	TERS	BASAL	May Sept. 1978	May Sept. 1979	Compiled Observations	Flexible Grouping
11	-	-	5.0	12	31	37	40	21	2.5	1.5	3.7	Black; #4 sister requested her placement and tutored	1
12	+	+	8.5	50	58	*	65	65	7.0	5.0	7.0	Works hard; wants to learn; high frequency hearing loss	2
13	-	-	6.5	30	50	*	55	50	5.0	4.0	5.0	Significant adults have low expectations; builds model airplanes	4
14	+	+	7.5	40	47	*	50	50	5.0	5.0	5.0	Wears glasses; repeated 1st grade; lives with grandparents	4
15	+	+	7.5	50	58	*	70	70	7.0	5.0	7.0	Leader in sports; math score higher than Language Arts	2
16	+	+	5.5	12	40	45	50	40	4.0	1.5	5.0	MA; moved to U.S. in 2nd grade; supportive family	3
17	+	+	7.5	31	49	50	59	50	5.0	3.3	5.0	Frequent absence; allergies; older sister helps her	4→1→4
18	+	+	6.5	41	58	*	65	55	5.0	4.0	6.0	Anglo son of PTA president; mother volunteered during program	1→2

+ or - reflects responses from Observation Checklists of Teacher and Parents re the child's undeveloped potential

* = did not attend Summer School

- = score unavailable because of absence or transfer

MA = Mexican American

post-test basal placement for each child. Column thirteen is an anecdotal record compiled throughout the year about each child. Whenever possible, if a student were transferring out, a post-test was administered but these data were not used. Those students who left at various times during the year were not exposed to the full impact of the program.

Presentation, Collection, and Analysis of Data

Skills improvement objectives

Objective #1: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B having been exposed to the Eclectic Communication Skills Program, will increase their mastery by 50 percent on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between Fall 1978 TERS scores and Spring 1979 TERS scores.

Table 9, page 78, shows the gain in standard scores on the pre- and post-tests of the Test of Essential Reading Skills for the targeted Group B students. Two of the students were absent and did not return before school was out in May.

Chart 1 on page 78 summarizes information from Table 9 and demonstrates that a total of 65 percent of the targeted students gained 16-30 points on their standard score for TERS, Fall 1978-Spring 1979.

TABLE 9

TERS STANDARD SCORE GAIN FOR GROUP B TARGET CHILDREN FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Student	Fall 1978 Pre-test	Spring 1979 Post-test	Gain
1	21	29	8
2	21	37	16
3	12	38	26
4	54	Absent	-
5	23	38	15
6	10	29	19
7	54	Absent	-
8	33	54	21
9	30	45	15
10	10	28	18
11	10	38	28
12	20	50	30
13	12	35	23
14	30	38	8
15	30	50	20
16	20	38	18
17	10	30	20
	Median 20	Median 38	Median 18

Chart 1

TERS STANDARD SCORE GAIN FOR GROUP B TARGET CHILDREN FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Students	Gain in Standard Score					
	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30
Number	2	2	2	6	2	3
Percent	12	12	12	35	12	18

Table 10 shows the percent of mastery on the pre- and post-tests of TERS.

TABLE 10

GROUP B
PERCENT MASTERY GAIN TERS
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Percent Gain
1	21	29	38
2	21	37	76
3	12	38	217
4	54	Absent	-
5	23	38	65
6	10	29	190
7	54	Absent	-
8	33	54	64
9	30	45	50
10	10	28	180
11	10	38	280
12	20	50	150
13	12	35	191
14	30	38	27
15	30	50	67
16	20	38	90
17	10	30	200

A comparison of pre- and post-tests results show that a total of 13 Children (#2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17) increased their mastery of the Test of Essential Reading Skills by 50 percent or more for the school year. Indeed, two students had a gain of more than 200 percent mastery. Eighty percent of the targeted students met the objective of an increase of 50 percent or more in skill mastery on the TERS.

Objective #2: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B, having been exposed to the Eclectic

Communication Skills Program, will achieve a gain of 1.0 grade equivalent scores in years and months for their basal reader placement. Comparison will be between Fall 1978 and Spring 1979 basal placement.

Of the targeted Group B students 93 percent achieved the objective of 1.0 grade equivalent in basal placement for the year's growth. Expectations were too low for this group as the majority exceeded the objective with an impressive gain. Chart 2 summarizes information in table 11 and demonstrates that 93 percent of the children exceeded the objective.

TABLE 11

BASAL READER PLACEMENT GAIN FOR GROUP B TARGET STUDENTS IN GRADE EQUIVALENT SCORES FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain in Grade Equivalent
1	2.7	4.0	1.3
2	2.1	4.0	1.9
3	1.2	4.0	2.8
4	5.0	6.0	1.0
5	2.8	Absent	-
6	1.8	3.0	2.2
7	5.0	6.0	1.0
8	3.5	5.0	1.5
9	3.3	5.0	1.7
10	1.8	3.0	1.2
11	1.8	5.0	3.2
12	2.1	4.0	1.9
13	1.2	4.0	2.8
14	3.3	5.0	1.7
15	3.3	4.0	.7
16	2.1	4.0	1.9
17	1.8	Absent	-

Chart 2

TARGET GROUP B
BASAL READER PLACEMENT
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Students	Gain in Grade Equivalent in Years and Months					
	Less than 1.0	1.0-1.5	1.6-2.0	2.1-2.5	2.6-3.0	3.1-3.5
Number	1	5	5	1	2	1
Percent	7	33	33	7	13	7

Objective #3: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group B students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve a predicted increase in growth on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison is to be made between predicted achievement as indicated on the Student Data Form (table 7, page 73) and obtained achievement, Fall 1979.

Table 12, page 82, reports predicted scores and obtained scores, Fall 1979, on the Test of Essential Reading Skills for Group B.

Two students moved from Dallas before school reopened, Fall 1979. Of the target group whose predicted and observed scores could be compared, 71 percent exceeded the predicted gain and 13 percent scored exactly as predicted. Thus by Fall 1979, a total of 84 percent of targeted Group B students achieved or exceeded the growth that was predicted for them.

TABLE 12

TARGET GROUP B
PREDICTED TERS SCORES COMPARED WITH ACHIEVED TERS SCORES, FALL 1979

Student	Predicted Scores	Achieved Scores	Difference
1	39	41	+ 2
2	31	39	+ 8
3	30	40	+10
4	65	60	- 5
5	30	Moved	-
6	28	30	+ 2
7	60	60	+ -
8	40	55	+15
9	38	50	+12
10	25	35	+10
11	30	50	+20
12	38	40	+ 2
13	40	50	+10
14	39	45	+ 6
15	40	45	+ 5
16	39	39	+ -
17	30	Moved	-

Range of gain: 0-20 SS Median Score Pre-test 38
Median gain: 5 SS Median Score Post-test 45
Mean gain: 5.8 points

Chart 3, page 83, is a comparison of TERS scores that were predicted for Fall 1979 for the fourth grade children who comprised the target students of Group B and the actual achieved scores, Fall 1979.

The difference in scores between predicted and achieved is demonstrated to range from .05 to 20. The chart shows that 74 percent scored 0-10 points more than predicted. This could be significant in setting goals for future instruction.

Chart 3

TARGET GROUP B
COMPARISON OF PREDICTED TERS SCORES AND
ACHIEVED TERS SCORES, FALL 1979

Students	Difference in Standard Scores				
	-05 to -01	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20
Number	1	7	4	2	1
Percent	7	47	27	13	7

Two students withdrew before Fall 1979.

Objective #4: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group B students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve an individually predicted increase in the level of basal placement. Comparison will be made between predicted basal placement for each student for Fall 1979 and achieved basal placement.

Table 13, page 84, reflects the predicted basal placement and achieved basal placement for Fall 1979. This table also reports that 40 percent of Group B were in the basal placement Fall 1979 that was predicted for them; 53 percent exceeded the predicted placement and were at a higher level. Only one child did not achieve the basal level predicted for him and this was not considered significant. Student #7, who was functioning at a 5.0 grade equivalent basal placement when school started, Fall 1978, was predicted to achieve at the 6.5 level, Fall 1979. He did achieve placement in the

TABLE 13

TARGET GROUP B
PREDICTED AND ACHIEVED BASAL
PLACEMENT FOR FALL 1979

Student	Predicted	Achieved	Gain
1	4.0	4.0	+ -
2	3.3	4.0	+ .7
3	3.0	4.0	+1.0
4	6.5	6.0	- .5
5	3.0	-	-
6	3.0	3.0	+ -
7	6.0	6.0	+ -
8	4.0	5.0	+1.0
9	3.8	5.0	+1.2
10	2.8	3.0	+ .2
11	3.0	5.0	+2.0
12	3.8	4.0	+ .2
13	4.0	4.0	+ -
14	4.0	5.0	+1.0
15	4.0	4.0	+ -
16	4.0	4.0	+ -
17	3.0	-	-

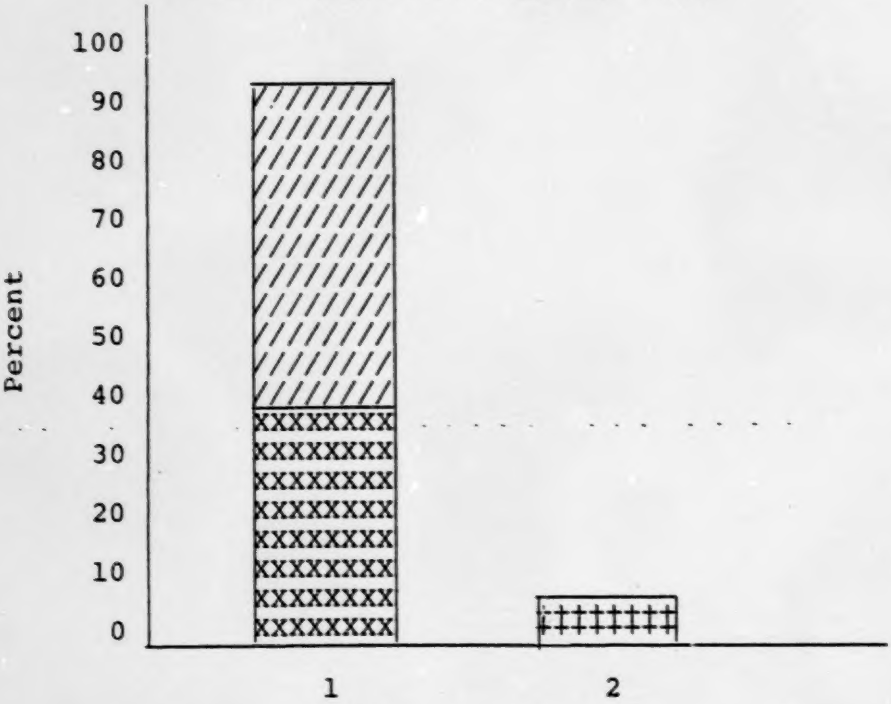
Range in gain = -.5 to 2.0
Mean gain = .5
Median gain = .2

basal at the 6.0 level which was still one level beyond his actual grade placement (fifth), Fall 1979. Student #7 had a history of frequent absences and was reported by teachers and parents as a trouble maker who was able to perform at a higher level than he was performing. The task force was satisfied that the other predictions were accurate and appropriate on a general basis.

Graph 1 on page 85 depicts the comparison of predicted and achieved basal placement for the children of Group B. Bar 1 reflects that 93 percent of the children achieved or exceeded their predicted basal placement. Bar 2 demonstrates that 7 percent of the children did not achieve the basal level predicted for them.

Graph 1

TARGET GROUP B
COMPARISON OF PREDICTED AND ACHIEVED
BASAL PLACEMENT FOR FALL 1979



1. Children who achieved or exceeded the predicted basal placement.

XXXXX - actual predicted level

///// - exceeded predicted level

2. Children who did not achieve predicted basal placement. +++++

Objective #5: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D having been exposed to the Eclectic Communication Skills Program will increase their mastery by 50 percent on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between Fall 1978 TERS scores and Spring 1979 TERS scores.

Table 14 reports pre- and post-test TERS scores for Group D.

TABLE 14

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF ACHIEVED TERS SCORES
FALL 1978--SPRING 1979

Student	Fall '78 Pre test	Spring '79 Post test	Gain
1	42	56	14
2	31	47	16
3	31	50	19
4	42	60	18
5	31	57	26
6	32	51	19
7	51	Absent	-
8	41	50	9
9	31	32	1
10	32	37	5
11	12	31	19
12	50	58	8
13	30	50	20
14	40	47	7
15	50	58	8
16	12	40	28
17	31	49	18
18	41	58	17
	Range 12-51 Median - 32	Range 31-60 Median - 50	Range 01-28 Median - 16

The range of increase in scores was 01-28 with the median increase of 16 points. Chart 4 compiles the scores in points gained.

Chart 4

TARGET GROUP D
TEST OF ESSENTIAL READING SKILLS
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Students	Gain in Standard Score					
	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30
Number	3	4	1	8	0	2
Percent	17	22	5	45	0	11

Fifty-six percent of the group gained 16 points or more and 11 percent gained more than 26 points.

Table 15, page 88, depicts the gain in percent on pre- and post-test TERS scores for Group D for Fall 1978 to Spring 1979. The objective was achieved as 75 percent of the group increased their TERS scores 50 percent or more between Fall 1978 pre-test scores and Spring 1979 post-test scores. Two children increased their mastery more than 100 percent. Student #11 gained 158 percent and student #16 increased 233 percent.

TABLE 15

TARGET GROUP D
PERCENT MASTERY GAIN TERS
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Student	Pre test	Post test	Percent Gain
1	42	56	33
2	31	47	52
3	31	50	61
4	42	60	43
5	31	57	83
6	32	51	59
7	51	Absent	-
8	41	50	22
9	31	32	3
10	32	37	16
11	12	31	158
12	50	58	16
13	30	50	66
14	40	47	18
15	50	58	16
16	12	40	233
17	31	49	58
18	41	58	41

Objective #6: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D, having been exposed to the Eclectic Communication Skills Program, will achieve a gain of 1.0 grade equivalent scores in years and months for their basal reader placement. Comparison will be between Fall 1978 and Spring 1979 basal placement.

Table 16, page 89, shows the gain in grade equivalent scores for Group D in their basal placement for Fall 1978 and Spring 1979. Of this group of children 83 percent achieved the objective of a gain of 1.0 or more grade equivalent scores. Scores of 2.0 or more were achieved by 44 percent of the children and one child (D16) gained 3.5 grade equivalent levels during the one year program.

TABLE 16

BASAL READER PLACEMENT GAIN FOR GROUP D TARGET
STUDENTS IN GRADE EQUIVALENT SCORES
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Student	Pre test	Post test	Gain in Grade Equivalent
1	4.0	6.0	2.0
2	5.0	6.0	1.0
3	5.0	5.7	.7
4	5.0	6.0	1.0
5	3.6	6.0	2.4
6	4.0	6.0	2.0
7	5.0	6.0	1.0
8	5.0	5.5	.5
9	5.0	4.5	- .5
10	1.5	3.7	2.2
11	1.5	3.7	2.2
12	5.0	7.0	2.0
13	4.0	5.0	1.0
14	5.0	5.0	+-
15	5.0	7.0	2.0
16	1.5	5.0	3.5
17	3.3	5.0	1.7
18	4.0	6.0	2.0

Chart 5 summarizes the information in Table 16 and demonstrates that 83 percent of the children exceeded the objective of 1.0 grade equivalent gain.

Chart 5

BASAL PLACEMENT GAIN FOR GROUP D
FALL 1978-SPRING 1979

Students	Gain in Grade Equivalent in Years and Months					
	Less than 1.0	1.0-1.5	1.6-2.0	2.1-2.5	2.6-3.0	3.1-3.5
Number	3	5	6	3	0	1
Percent	17	28	33	17	0	5

Objective #7: Seventy-five percent of targeted Group D students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve a predicted increase in growth on the Test of Essential Reading Skills. Comparison will be made between predicted achievement as indicated on the Student Data Form (table 8, page 75) and obtained achievement, Fall 1979.

Table 17 reports a comparison of predicted and achieved TERS scores for Group D, Fall 1979.

TABLE 17

TARGET GROUP D
PREDICTED SCORES AND ACHIEVED SCORES ON
TEST OF ESSENTIAL READING SKILLS
FALL 1979

Student	Predicted	Achieved	Difference
1	52	60	+ 8
2	51	60	+ 9
3	47	50	+ 3
4	50	61	+11
5	52	60	+ 8
6	40	57	+17
7	60	57	- 3
8	50	50	+ -
9	40	37	- 3
10	40	39	- 1
11	21	40	+19
12	65	65	+ -
13	50	55	+ 5
14	50	50	+ -
15	70	70	+ -
16	40	50	+10
17	50	59	+ 9
18	55	65	+10

Four children or 22 percent of the group obtained the exact score predicted for them. Eleven children or 61 percent of the group exceeded expectations. Three children did not achieve the predicted score. Chart 6 compiles this information by reporting the difference in standard scores between predicted and achieved scores.

Chart 6

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF PREDICTED TERS SCORES AND
ACHIEVED TERS SCORES, FALL 1979

Students	Difference in Standard Scores				
	-05 to -01	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20
Number	3	6	6	1	2
Percent	17	33	33	5	12

Chart 6 demonstrates that the objective was obtained as 83 percent of Group D children achieved or surpassed the TERS score predicted for them for Fall 1979. A range of difference in scores of 0-10 was accomplished by 66 percent of the sixth grade target children of Group D.

Objective #8: Seventy-five percent of the targeted Group D students who have been identified as having undeveloped potential will achieve an individually predicted increase in the level of basal placement. Comparison will be made between predicted basal placement for Fall 1979 and achieved basal placement.

Comparison of predicted and achieved basal placement for

Group D for Fall 1979 is reported in table 18.

TABLE 18

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF PREDICTED AND ACHIEVED BASAL PLACEMENT, FALL 1979

Student	Predicted	Achieved	Gain
1	5.0	6.0	+1.0
2	6.0	6.0	+ -
3	5.8	5.7	- .1
4	5.8	6.0	+ .2
5	6.0	6.0	+ -
6	5.0	6.0	+1.0
7	6.0	6.0	+ -
8	5.7	5.5	- .2
9	4.5	4.5	+ -
10	3.7	3.7	+ -
11	2.5	3.7	+1.2
12	7.0	7.0	+ -
13	5.0	5.0	+ -
14	5.0	5.0	+ -
15	7.0	7.0	+ -
16	4.0	5.0	+1.0
17	5.0	5.0	+ -
18	5.0	6.0	+1.0

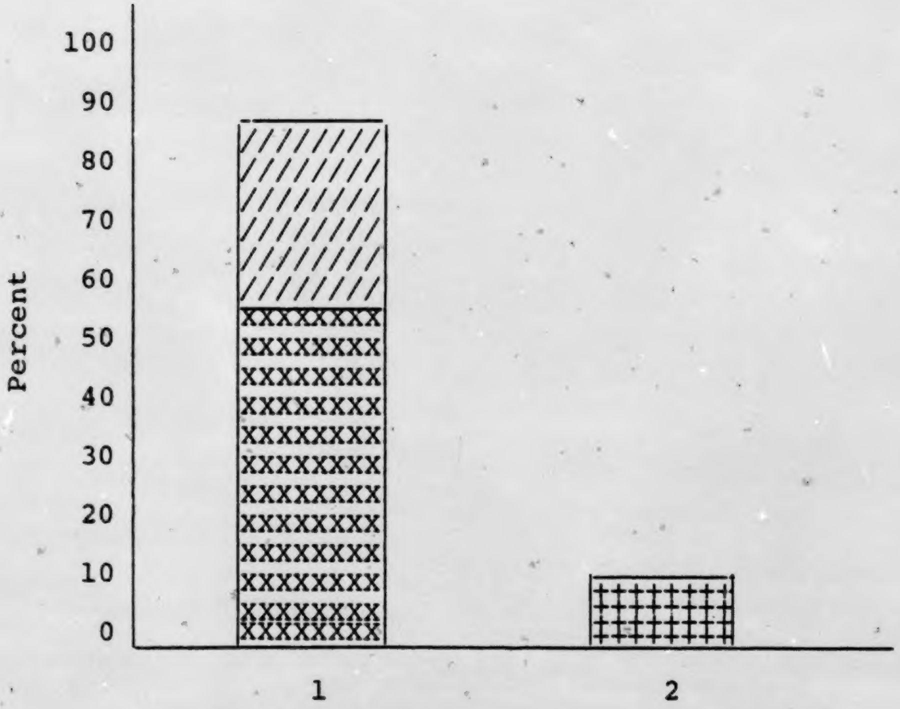
Of these sixth grade students 56 percent achieved the level of basal placement for Fall 1979 that was predicted for them and 5 percent achieved nominal gains. A score of 1.0 grade equivalent beyond the predicted score was obtained by 28 percent of the children. Thus the objective was reached by 89 percent of targeted Group D who achieved the level of basal placement that was predicted for them for Fall 1979.

Graph 2 on page 93 demonstrates this information. Bar 1 combines the percent achievement of those who reached or exceeded the level of basal placement predicted for them as

89 percent of Group D students. Bar 2 depicts the 11 percent children who did not arrive at the predicted level of basal placement.

Graph 2

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF PREDICTED AND ACHIEVED
BASAL PLACEMENT FOR FALL 1979



1. Students who achieved predicted basal placement.

XXXXX - actual predicted level

▨ - exceeded predicted level by 1.0 g.e. or more

2. Students who did not achieve predicted basal placement. +++++

Discussion about Skills Improvement Objectives

Targeted children from Group B were in the fourth grade at the beginning of the 1978-79 school year and targeted Group D children were starting sixth grade. Only two children from both groups (B #4, 7) started school scoring on grade level on the TERS, Fall 1978. The fact that the objectives were achieved or exceeded by the majority of both groups verifies that these were children with undeveloped potential. At the beginning of school, Fall 1979, a greater percent of both groups were closer to working at their grade level.

It is extremely important to set reasonable expectations and goals for individual children. Making up for four to six years of slow and uneven growth would be unrealistic in one year's program, although there were dramatic gains in results for children from both Groups B and D. It is the ongoing individualized instruction using an eclectic program that is vital. That is why maintenance of skills became a significant part of this program.

One other aspect of reasonable expectations for children is placing them in the right programs and using appropriate materials. The basal program is an example of this tactic. Six students from Group D started school Fall 1978 in a basal that was beyond their ability as indicated by TERS testing, and one student (#10) was placed too low:

GROUP D CHILDREN AND BASAL PLACEMENT, FALL 1978

Student	TERS	Actual Basal	Appropriate Basal
2	31	5.0	30
3	31	5.0	30
8	41	5.0	40
9	31	5.0	30
10	32	1.5	30/32
13	30	4.0	30
14	40	5.0	40

Traditionally it is difficult to get teachers to make the adjustment upward or downward in basal placement in spite of all the testing they do that indicates the necessity to change. It is equally difficult to get them to usa a co-basal rather than teaching a student using the same basal he has already completed and failed. The elements of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program made this adjustment easier for some teachers. An example of this is student #13 in Group B.

Student #13 in Group B was a shy black child who responded positively to the program. Fall 1978 he scored slightly above first grade on the TERS and was placed in the first level for his basal program. Teacher and parent responses indicated belief that he could improve his progress. Spache Listening (Potential) supported this belief with his scoring at the sixth grade fifth month level. His teacher classified him as Group 1 at the beginning of the year as a student who needed personal attention and extra motivation to risk. She set short term goals with frequent reinforcement at his level 1 placement. She incorporated the elements of accepting and using his own language in instruction. Encouragement to bring materials from home to use in instruction were not very successful until she demonstrated to the group that cereal boxes, Sunday School literature, posters, and catalogs could be used. Soon he was working more with Group 4 tactics than Group 1. He responded to the Language Experience tactics and learned as he participated in the publication of a class book. As his language was accepted and he grew in skills through Slingerland and Language Experience tactics he became more outgoing. He demonstrated on the playground and in an auditorium program that his verbal facility and listening skills worked very well in a non-academic setting. The transfer of success from the classroom to the playground returned to the classroom in his ability to work in a basal at a 2.4 level in December. The acceptance of the bidialectal patterns of speech during oral reading encouraged the student, and his progress encouraged the teacher to risk using these same tactics with other students. This one student scored at the 3.5 level in May on the TERS and 4.0 level in basal placement. He was one of the four who attended summer school and continued to demonstrate growth. He also eagerly read paperback books for pleasure that were offered by the librarian. Because his progress was significant and monitored by other teachers, they were encouraged to risk different tactics and material. Basal placement for Fall 1979 for this student was fourth level with the assurance of reinforcement of last year's skills and a willingness to adjust by his new teacher if it were indicated.

Maintenance of Skills Objectives

Every teacher has had the experience of teaching and testing a skill then having a student demonstrate success at one time only to have him fail that same skill at a later date. A student may be able to demonstrate mastery of a skill in the Spring and unable to use it in the Fall although it is marked successful on his Progress Form. Therefore, a measure of success of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program was how much of the gain the children demonstrated Spring 1979 was still a part of their growth and skills for further learning when school reopened Fall 1979.

Maintenance of skills was measured using TERS scores at the end of May 1979--the close of the year's ECSP--and the beginning of school, September 1979. Comparison of scores between these dates was done for both groups.

There were four children from Group B (B6, 11, 13, 15) and four from Group D (D4, 11, 16, 17) who participated in a summer school program. A comparison of the gain of these eight children on TERS for Spring to Summer and Summer to Fall was made as a measure of maintenance. Comparison was not done between children attending summer school and those who did not attend because this would have been a comparison of programs and this study deals only with development of individual students and a comparison of their individual growth.

Since a predicted score for each student was determined to indicate his individual development of potential, a comparison of predicted scores and achieved scores was made to determine skills improvement.

A student would have to maintain knowledge of the skills taught over a period of time in order to reach a predicted score at one of the three formal evaluation periods. Therefore, the timing of *when* that predicted achievement occurred--Spring, Summer, or Fall--was decided as another measure of maintenance of skills. A comparison between predicted scores and achieved scores for Spring, Summer, or Fall 1979 on the TERS was an indicator of how soon the targeted children reached their predicted score and how much instruction and practice was needed in order for them to do it.

Objective #9: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B, having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program will maintain their mastery as measured on the Test of Essential Reading Skills without formal instruction. Comparison will be made between Spring 1979 and Fall 1979 TERS scores.

A comparison of skill maintenance as measured by the Test of Essential Reading Skills, Spring 1979 to Fall 1979, is offered in Table 19 on page 99. Data for four children is incomplete; none scored at the level they had the previous Spring; and one child scored negatively. But the good news was that eight of the nine children, or 89 percent of the group, scored higher than they had the previous Spring.

As a group 40 percent scored at grade level Fall 1979 as compared with 12 percent at grade level before the program began, and 20 percent at grade level Spring 1979. One student (B1), who had started the year as a fourth grade student at the second level then reached beginning third level by Spring continued maintenance and growth during the summer for a gain of 41 percent to fourth level Fall 1979. The objective was met and exceeded.

TABLE 19

TARGET GROUP B
COMPARISON FOR MAINTENANCE OF SKILLS ON
TEST OF ESSENTIAL READING SKILLS
SPRING 1979-FALL 1979

Student	Spring '79	Fall '79	Difference
1	29	41	+12
2	37	39	+ 2
3	38	40	+ 2
4	Absent	60	-
5	38	Moved	-
7	Absent	60	-
8	54	55	+ 1
9	45	50	+ 5
10	28	35	+ 7
12	50	40	-10
14	38	45	+ 7
16	38	39	+ 1
17	30	Moved	-

Objective #10: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program will maintain their mastery as measured on the Test of Essential Reading Skills without formal instruction. Comparison will be made between Spring 1979 and Fall 1979 TERS scores.

TABLE 20

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON FOR MAINTENANCE OF SKILLS ON
TEST OF ESSENTIAL READING SKILLS
SPRING 1979-FALL 1979

Student	Spring '79	Fall '79	Difference
1	56	60	+ 4
2	47	60	+13
3	50	50	+ -
5	57	60	+ 3
6	51	57	+ 6
7	Absent	57	-
8	50	50	+ -
9	32	37	+ 5
10	37	39	+ 2
12	58	65	+ 7
13	50	55	+ 5
14	47	50	+ 3
15	58	70	+12
18	58	65	+ 7

Table 20 reports a comparison of TERS scores for Spring-Fall 1979 for target Group D children. Data was incomplete for one child and two children's scores stayed the same. The objective was reached by thirteen of the fourteen children, or 93 percent of the group, maintaining or exceeding their score of the previous Spring.

Although 79 percent of the group demonstrated growth in achievement compared to their own individual scores (Fall 1978-Spring 1979) none of the group was on grade level according to Spring 1979 TERS scores. Fall 1979 one student (D15) scored at grade level and there were no negative scores.

Objective #11: Seventy-five percent of the target children from Group B, having been exposed to one year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and one six-week session of formal instruction in summer school, will demonstrate maintenance or an increase in skills. Comparison is to be made between Spring-Summer, Summer-Fall, and Spring-Fall 1979 TERS scores.

There were four children from Group B (B6, 11, 13, 15) who participated in the DISD Summer School Program. Table 21 offers a comparison of their scores.

TABLE 21

TARGET GROUP B
COMPARISON OF ACHIEVED TERS SCORES FOR CHILDREN
WHO ATTENDED SUMMER SCHOOL, 1979

Student	Spring-Summer		Gain	Summer-Fall		Gain	Total Gain
6	29	30	+ 1	30	30	+ -	+ 1
11	38	45	+ 7	45	50	+ 5	+12
13	35	40	+ 5	40	50	+10	+15
15	50	45	- 5	45	45	+ -	- 5

Two students (B11, 13) showed a gain in comparing scores at the close of Summer School with Spring scores and they maintained that growth and increased another positive gain by Fall testing. One student (B6) gained 1 score at the close of Summer School and stayed at that level when he started school in the Fall. Another student scored negative 5 scores between Spring and Summer and remained 5 scores lower in the Fall than the previous Spring.

Seventy-five percent of Group B target children maintained or increased their scores after six weeks of instruction in a traditional summer program. Also, 75 percent of the children maintained or increased their scores between Spring-Fall 1979 testing. The objective was met.

Objective #12: Seventy-five percent of children from Group D, having been exposed to one year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and one six-week session of formal instruction in summer school, will demonstrate maintenance or an increase in skills. Comparison is to be made between Spring-Summer and Summer-Fall, and Spring-Fall 1979 TERS scores.

Four children from target Group D attended Summer School. Table 22 reports the results of this experience.

TABLE 22

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF ACHIEVED TERS SCORES FOR CHILDREN
WHO ATTENDED SUMMER SCHOOL, 1979

Student	Spring-Summer		Gain	Summer-Fall		Gain	Total Gain
4	60	61	+ 1	61	61	+ -	+ 1
11	31	37	+ 6	37	40	+ 3	+ 9
16	40	45	+ 5	45	50	+ 5	+10
17	49	50	+ 1	50	59	+ 9	+10

All four children made some growth as demonstrated by a gain in scores between Spring and Summer. Three children were able to increase the positive scores between Summer and Fall testing and one child maintained his Summer level. All four children demonstrated a total maintenance and increase of skills between Spring-Fall TERS scores. The objective was achieved by 100 percent of the group.

Comparison of Predicted and Achieved Scores

As reported earlier, a quantitative objective was written in the form of a predicted TERS score for each individual in the target groups. It was determined significant not only to measure the gain between predicted and achieved scores but also to determine *when* a child reached his predicted score and if he were able to maintain the score until the next school year.

Objective #13: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group B, having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and having a quantitative objective in the form of a predicted TERS score to achieve by Fall 1979, will achieve that prediction by Spring 1979 and maintain the score until Fall 1979. Comparison is to be made with the predicted scores and the achieved scores for Spring, Summer, Fall 1979.

Table 23 is a comparison of achieved and predicted scores for 1979 for targeted Group B children. Eleven children reached their predicted score in the Spring, one child in the Summer, and four children in the Fall. One child (B4) missed his predicted score by .05. Seventy-three percent of the children achieved their predicted score by Spring, missing the objective by 2 percent. But of this total group of children 80 percent either met or maintained their predicted achievement by Fall 1979.

TABLE 23

TARGET GROUP B
COMPARISON OF ACHIEVED TERS SCORES
FOR SPRING, SUMMER, AND FALL 1979
WITH PREDICTED SCORES

Students	Predicted TERS	Achieved TERS 1979 Spring	Summer	Fall
1	39	29	*	41
2	31	37	*	39
3	30	38	*	40
4	65	-	*	60
5	30	38	Moved	-
6	28	29	30	30
7	60	-	*	60
8	50	54	*	55
9	38	45	*	50
10	25	28	*	35
11	30	38	45	50
12	38	50	*	40
13	40	35	40	50
14	39	38	*	45
15	40	50	45	45
16	39	38	*	39
17	30	30	Moved	-
Range of score	25-65	28-54	30-45	30-60

* = did not attend — - = score unavailable because of absence or transfer

two students moved away

In examining the range of predictions and achieved scores one learns that the predicted range was three points lower and five points higher than any achieved score. The predicted score was too low for children B3, 9, 10, 11, and 13 as they achieved more than one year's growth and were able to maintain or increase their gain after achievement. Student B13 did not achieve his predicted score until Summer School but he still was able to increase his skills by Fall and maintain his predicted achievement.

Objective #14: Seventy-five percent of the targeted students from Group D, having been exposed to one school year of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program and having a quantitative objective in the form of a predicted TERS score to achieve by Fall 1979, will achieve that prediction by Spring 1979 and maintain the score until Fall 1979. Comparison is to be made with the predicted scores and the achieved scores, Spring, Summer, Fall 1979.

Table 24 on page 106 reports a comparison of achieved TERS scores and predicted scores for targeted children of Group D. The range of predicted and achieved scores was more exact than any Group B scores (predicted 40-70, achieved, Fall, 37-70).

Ten children achieved their predicted score by Spring testing; one child in Summer School; and four children in the Fall. Three children (D7, 9, 10) did not attain their predicted score. The objective was not reached by Spring (59 percent), although 83 percent achieved their individually predicted score by Fall as expected.

TABLE 24

TARGET GROUP D
COMPARISON OF ACHIEVED TERS SCORES
FOR SPRING, SUMMER, AND FALL, 1979
WITH PREDICTED SCORES

Students	Predicted TERS	Achieved TERS 1979		
		Spring	Summer	Fall
1	52	56	*	60
2	51	47	*	60
3	47	50	*	50
4	50	60	61	61
5	52	57	*	60
6	40	51	*	57
7	60	-	*	57
8	50	50	*	50
9	40	32	*	37
10	40	37	*	39
11	21	31	37	40
12	65	58	*	65
13	50	50	*	55
14	50	47	*	50
15	70	58	*	70
16	40	40	45	50
17	50	49	50	59
18	55	58	*	65
Range of Scores	40-70	31-60	45-61	37-70

* = did not attend

- = score unavailable because of absence or transfer

Discussion of Maintenance of Skills

The Task Force and this writer were surprised that re-evaluation yielded such favorable results for maintenance of skills. The majority of these children had been without formal instruction for fourteen weeks. Five possible explanations were realized to help understand this phenomena:

(1) This was a group of carefully screened children

who were identified as having undeveloped potential by concrete and empirical data.

(2) Developmentally these children may have been ready to take advantage of the Eclectic Communication Skills strategy. For instance, Group D, the older group of children, scored more consistently higher in the Fall than did Group B, the younger children.

(3) Parents had the opportunity to learn what to expect of their children and how to help them progress through shared participation with the school.

(4) Children were taught and encouraged to use their communication skills in their home environment through the school year. Materials (recipes, catalogs, junk mail) and opportunities (writing letters, diaries, creative drama, etc.) were identified and used to develop skills through the school year.

(5) The Hawthorne effect is one other explanation. This is the tendency of a group who are receiving a special or new treatment to react positively and perform better than they would in the absence of the treatment. The effect of enthusiasm and improved performance results from the "specialness" or "newness" rather than the treatment itself.

Participation by the children in the Summer School program had been proposed to counteract the traditional loss of skills, especially by low achieving students, over vacation months.

Summer School was offered in a limited number of schools in a region and the one McKinley students were to attend was several miles away. Enrollment and attendance for six weeks by McKinley students was low and the program that was offered was the structured traditional plan with single grouping. But this opportunity for formal instruction had to be considered in the evaluation for those children who attended.

Gains in scores for students who attended Summer School appeared to offer no reliable pattern for success. Although five of the eight children who attended Summer School scored significantly so did eleven of the children who did not attend Summer School. One child who attended Summer School (B15) fell below his spring TERS score. So did a child (B12) who did not attend Summer School.

The individual student and development of his potential is more important for this evaluation. Student B13 has already been discussed as one who demonstrated a spurt of growth and achievement during the year.

Special effort was made for B11 to attend Summer School. Teachers had been reluctant to recommend him for the program and his low Spache score (33) reinforced their reluctance. But pressure from his mother, who believed he was more capable, resulted in his inclusion in the target Group B children. During one of the listening skill lessons early in the year the teacher suspected possible hearing loss and referred him to the audiologist. A high frequency hearing loss was confirmed. The realization of the consequences of this loss in the classrooms with female teachers whose voice range is high frequency and in a traditional program that stressed phonics resulted in early program readjustment. Dramatic gains resulted bringing him nearly to the fourth level from first level during the school year. Summer School was viewed as an opportunity to reinforce his skills and he continued to demonstrate achievement.

Another student (D13) reported reading independently for pleasure during the summer. Although she did not attend Summer School she did maintain her achievement from the previous year and scored higher in the Fall than the Spring. A Mexican-American child (D16) was also reported with more potential than previously believed. Her response to the Eclectic Communication Skills Program showed continued gain in achievement that was maintained and reinforced during Summer School. It was considered significant that her family was supportive of her and the program and her parents had enrolled in the Adult Literacy class.

CHAPTER VII

UNANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The effectiveness of the Communication Skills Program is verified by the evidence in the preceding section. However, there were a number of unanticipated positive outcomes.

A general improvement in attendance and attitude by students and teachers was observed. The social and emotional climate changed through the year from a depressed tension-producing aura to a more relaxed and free atmosphere with enthusiasm and creativity. The average daily attendance at each of the six-week statistical periods during the 1977-78 and the 1978-79 school year is recorded in the following data:

	1977-78	1978-79
Kindergarten	94.5%	96.5%
First Grade	95.8%	97.3%
Second Grade	94.0%	96.2%
Third Grade	91.3%	93.8%
Fourth Grade	90.8%	95.3%
Fifth Grade	90.1%	93.5%
Sixth Grade	93.1%	96.5%

These figures amounted to an average 92.8 percent attendance for the 1977-78 school year, and an average of 95.6 percent for the 1978-79 school year. This was only a difference of 2.8 percent, but any increase is significant in a school district where the attendance level is constantly dropping.

The third and last stage of the Language Experience

Program predicts decreased discipline referrals. A tally of discipline referrals to the office during the school year 1977-78 totaled 380. Of these referrals, 70 percent were for offenses that amounted to about 2 percent of the referrals five years earlier. From this 70 percent, 30 percent was for fighting, 10 percent for illegal solicitation of money, 20 percent for theft, and 10 percent for profanity. During the 1978-79 school year, the total number of referrals dropped to 210. A comparison of student referrals over the two years reveals that in three out of the four highest causes for referrals there was a drop of 50 percent or more. The 1977-78 referrals involved seventy-four students, while the referrals for 1978-79 represented thirty-eight students. Improved communication surely can be credited with making a contribution to this benefit.

The developing of a more positive attitude and enthusiastic support of the program by teachers proved to be another encouraging outcome. When evaluating their responses to the question "Are you apprehensive about teaching other age level students?" in May 1978, eighteen of twenty-seven faculty members responded "yes." A year later when a reassessment took place, May 1979, on a similar question only two teachers indicated difficulty in working with students at different grade levels. Becoming a better teacher and reducing their own apathy or boredom were two responses indicated by teachers as outcomes of working with different students at different levels and skills.

During the school year 1977-78 teacher absence was recorded as 162 days absence. Teacher absence during 1978-79 school year was recorded as 148 days. This difference is even more significant in view of the fact that one teacher was ill for 23 days and did not take a leave of absence.

Community involvement was another area of improvement. Previously it was extremely difficult to have any contact or communication between parents and faculty. Although there are no records of a statistical nature for parent contacts for 1977-78, we are confident as a result of this year's records and informal parent interviews that the following data indicates an increase in parent contacts for the 1978-79 school year:

Parent Contacts 1978-79

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Percent contacts by phone	1	4	13	6	8	4	10
Percent contacts by written correspondence	7	9	14	14	18	12	15
Percent contacts by personal conference	92	86	73	74	74	81	75
Percent parent contacts	100	99	100	94	100	97	100

(Information taken from teacher records)

The reproductive effect of enthusiasm and involvement of parents/community in developing the Communications Skill Program is believed responsible for this positive effect. An evening program of the Adult Education Classes for language development was formulated and continues for the McKinley community as an outcome of the one meeting during Texas Public School Week.

Parents became more knowledgeable and supportive of the school and the instructional program as reflected by the evaluation forms sent to Research and Evaluation. At the end of the parent conference regarding Test of Essential Reading Skills parents were encouraged to complete an evaluation form noting their observations and feelings about their child's instructional program. Both teachers and parents were anonymous and only the name of the school and the evaluation of its instructional program were recorded. The forms were sent to Research and Evaluation where the results were tallied showing 97 percent increase in participation and support for 1978-79 over 1977-78.

Not every educator nor person from the community was positive and supportive of the program. The teacher who had been involved with the Exemplary Reading Program unexpectedly announced plans to retire the day after school was out. She cited her health as the reason. She had fostered the highly structured detail of the Exemplary Reading Program but had struggled against team teaching and flexible grouping.

Other teachers had complained about the dearth of suitable materials to develop listening skills. There was also expressed frustration about the noisy room air conditioners that interfered with listening and speaking instruction and practice.

The problem of bilingual and bidialectical language in the community continued. When the policy of accepting language differences and fostering a child's native language as he was instructed in English reached the community one Mexican-American family visited the principal. They had him write on their child's permanent record and inform the teachers that there was to be no tolerance nor instruction in their child's native Spanish language. (He was not a member of the target groups of children.) Also, children continued ridicule of another child's language even when a teacher was accepting of it during Language Experience exercises.

Setting realistic expectations for the children was as big a problem at the beginning of this school year (1979-80) as it was previously. This is verified by the number of children who are in too difficult a level of basal program (39% of target Group D children) throughout the school. But there is improvement.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. Eighty percent of the targeted children from Group B and 75 percent of the targeted children from Group D increased their mastery of the Test of Essential Reading Skills by 50 percent or more in one school year.
2. Achievement in growth of communication skills as indicated by basal reader placement of 1.0 grade equivalent or more was gained by 93 percent of targeted children from Group B and 83 percent of targeted children from Group D.
3. Eighty-four percent of targeted Group B children achieved or exceeded their individually predicted TERS score as did 83 percent of targeted Group D children.
4. Of the two groups of targeted children, 93 percent of Group B and 89 percent of Group D achieved or exceeded the basal level placement predicted for them by Fall 1979.
5. Maintenance of skills over the summer months when children had no formal instruction for fourteen weeks was accomplished by both targeted groups. Eighty-nine percent of Group B and 93 percent of Group D maintained or exceeded their Spring level of TERS mastery.
6. Four children from each group had six weeks of formal

instruction during the summer. Of these students 75 percent of targeted Group B students and 100 percent of targeted Group D students maintained or exceeded their Spring level of mastery on TERS.

7. Each child in both groups had an individually predicted level of mastery on TERS to achieve by Fall 1979. For targeted Group B children 73 percent reached their predicted level by Spring and 80 percent met or maintained their predicted level by Fall. For targeted Group D children, 59 percent reached their predicted level by Spring and 83 percent met or maintained their predicted level by Fall.
8. Educators, including the task force and the director of the program, continue to underestimate the ability of children with a history of under achievement.
9. The majority of the teachers responded positively to working with the total student body and total school program for the implementation of an expanded communications effort. They expressed satisfaction at being so involved, decreased their absence, and increased personal communication among themselves and with the parents and members of the community.
10. One hundred percent of the parents of students of the target groups completed the Observation Checklist by themselves or with aid of the visiting teacher. Parental conferences became more rewarding as indicated by teacher

and parent comments. Parent and teacher interaction was more frequent and less defensive.

11. Students responded with enthusiasm and effort to flexibility as indicated by movements in grouping and levels placement. Individualizing and personalizing of a student's program has a positive effect as demonstrated on behavior, attendance, and achievement reports.

Recommendations

The May 1979 staff development program was an evaluation and analysis of the past year's effort in the Communication Skills Program. The following observations and recommended changes were suggested. Some of the observed strengths of the program were:

> children functioning at their level, children involved with more members of the student body, teachers involved in the total school program rather than just their class, children and teachers having an expanded opportunity with new materials and methods.

Some of the observed weaknesses were:

> not enough planning time, need for better individual record keeping, need for improved communication among the faculty, need for more resource people, need for better scheduling of audio visuals and some limited materials.

The following recommendations were offered:

1. That a skills workshop be held for teachers in August each year reviewing new techniques and methods and reinforcing the ones taught previously.
2. That a systems management notebook be developed from this year's records and published by the DISD to provide uniformity among teachers.
3. That the Student Data Form be available as a model for use by every teacher to help personalize children's records.
4. That testing and more careful diagnosis be done before skill level placement, and that after proper placement, skill level records be progressively maintained and stay with a child if he transfers.
5. That parents and faculty be provided with more evidence of how children learn at different rates and more ways to meet these differences in communicating.
6. That faculty and parents be informed and trained in informal tactics to determine the potential of each child.
7. That every child in school have either a parent or an advocate who could help monitor that child's progress.
8. That the parent advisory committee be included in the evaluation and analysis workshop next year.
9. That a part of the future bond program for school renovation and repair include an analysis of noise and lighting conditions in older schools, and that provision be made to improve all deficiencies.

CHAPTER IX

INSTITUTIONALIZING AND DISSEMINATING THE ECLECTIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM

The purpose of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program was to effect improvement in the communication skills of children. Improved communication skills was a need of children not only at McKinley but throughout the school district, city, and elsewhere. Indeed, it is a universal need of human beings.

If improved communication is, in fact, a universal need, then this program has been designed as a model to be available and used as a unit or in parts with only minor modifications to suit circumstances and conditions locally. That this is possible is verified by the fact that it has continued as the program for communication development (speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills) at McKinley Elementary and the director has been transferred to another responsibility in communication in another sub-district of Dallas. The task force had ownership of the program and continued to refine and expand it to meet the needs of the children.

Through visits of Central Office personnel and traveling mid-management personnel other schools in the Southwest Sub-District learned of the E.C.S.P. and sent management teams to observe and learn how it functioned. Elements of E.C.S.P. are in operation at eight other elementary schools in the Southwest Sub-District and the total program is being adapted with modifications to suit those populations.

End of year reports to Central Office Management resulted in the Director of Reading in Dallas lauding the effort at McKinley as a comprehensive approach to satisfy the objectives of the Test of Essential Reading Skills and to meet the needs in the design of the Baseline Curriculum. It has been recommended as a model program for these purposes.

The director of the program has presented the design of the Eclectic Communication Skills Program for staff development in other schools throughout the city. A more intensive reporting and demonstration was offered in Title I workshops during ten Saturdays, January-March 1979. At the beginning of the 1979-80 school year the week of staff development for Title I personnel included training in the Eclectic Communication Skills Program as it had been adapted to the Title I proposal and guidelines. This affected 57 schools in Dallas and 17,100 children.

A project of DISD is the Dunbar Teacher Center. This is a demonstration school for teachers throughout the city to have release time from school to go to Dunbar and observe master strategies and personnel in action with children. The E.C.S.P. is a strategy under review for presentation. Some of its elements have been incorporated in a staff development program for professional personnel titled STYLE, Strategies for Teaching Young Learners Effectively.

The director has acted as a consultant to the private Christian schools and has worked with the headmasters and staff to incorporate the E.C.S.P. into their program. The flexibility of the program has been amplified by the ability to choose parts such as the Student Data Form and the grouping patterns and incorporate them into a single classroom, a grade level, a school level, or an entire city program.

The International Reading Association has acted as a forum to present the E.C.S.P. to a wide population. It has been reported in a regional meeting and at the state level. The director of the program, as an officer of IRA at the state level, has responded to queries about its development and implementation informally and through correspondence. This is an open-ended subject with much professional interest and opportunity for wide implementation and further development.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY

The Eclectic Communication Skills Program can be summarized by answering four questions:

1. Why was the program developed and implemented?

   Many of the four hundred students of a low income minority population in a K-6 school were underachieving compared to their previous performance.

   Research and literature report one must be able to communicate effectively to live successfully.

2. What was hoped to be achieved by the program?

   The goal was to identify children with undeveloped potential then effect skill improvement and maintenance of those skills over a period of time without instruction.

3. How was this achieved?

   Under the direction of this writer a task force of teachers and community persons visited and researched other programs. They developed the strategy and tactics of an eclectic program appropriate for the needs of the children. The program used the materials on hand and incorporated flexible grouping and team teaching. Judgment, informed opinion, and observation of professional and community personnel was used to refine the program. Pre and post test design was followed to determine skill development and maintenance of skills of the children.

4. How may it be determined if the program did what it set out to do?

More than 75 percent of the target groups of children achieved or exceeded their individually predicted score measuring skill growth and maintenance. Also, more than 75 percent of the target groups of children achieved or exceeded their individually predicted gain in Basal placement.

Professional and community personnel commented favorably on the program and the gain in skills of the children.

The program has been adopted by the pilot school and others in the area; it is being dissiminated in Dallas schools both public and private.

APPENDICES

Select and check ✓ program components to be reviewed.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS EFFECTIVE PROGRAM LOCATIONS	Class Organization and Schedule	Diagnosis-Prescription Methods	Instructional Approaches	Student Motivation	Parent-Community Involvement	Personnel Requirements	Staff Development	First-Language Instruction	Materials	Materials Keyed to Skills	Instructional Equipment	Management System	Recordkeeping	Facilities	Evaluation	Start-up Cost	Per-Pupil Operating Cost		
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

APPENDIX B

ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

GRADE OR LEVEL

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6							
	RATE 1-5 USING SCALE BELOW													
A. Is reading taught as a separate subject?														
B. Is reading taught indirectly through other content courses?														
C. Is special assistance provided for students in special need of reading help?														
D. Is single-teacher, multi-subject organization used in the reading program?														
E. Is a reading specialist available to teach students and/or consult with teachers?														
F. Is team teaching used in the reading program?														
G. Is a certified teacher used on a one-to-one or small-group basis?														
H. Is student cross-age teaching used?														
I. Is a paraprofessional staff member available to assist the reading teacher?														
J. Other (Specify) ________________														

K. Which of the following basic approaches and techniques are used for reading instruction?

. Meaning Emphasis														
. Code Emphasis														
. Linguistics														
. Modified Alphabet														
. Programmed Learning														
. Individualized Reading														
. Language Experience														
. Eclectic														

RATING SCALE

1–Completely Satisfactory
2–Some Improvements Needed
3–Major Improvements Needed
4–Completely Unsatisfactory
5–Inappropriate for grade/level

APPENDIX C

READING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

PROGRAM ELEMENTS	GRADE OR LEVEL													Assigned Priority* (1-3)
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1. Student Performance														
Standardized Tests	Record average months above or below norm (from Data Collection Form)													
. Word Recognition														
. Vocabulary														
. Reading Comprehension														
. Spelling														
. Word Usage														
. Study Skills														
.														
.														
Other Measures	RATE 1-5 USING SCALE BELOW													
. Are criterion-referenced tests given to students?														
. Are informal reading inventories given to students?														
. Is a survey given to determine student attitudes toward reading?														
. Is an inventory given to determine student reading interests?														
2. Evaluation Strategies	RATE 1-5 USING SCALE BELOW													
. Diagnostic methods are used with most or all students to determine individual reading needs.														
. Teachers have selected specific objectives for each student, and performance is measured in terms of these objectives.														
. Records of progress are kept for each student's performance.														
. Students are kept informed of their progress and are involved in self-evaluation (teacher-student conferences).														

RATING SCALE:
1—Completely Satisfactory
2—Some Improvements Needed
3—Major Improvements Needed
4—Completely Unsatisfactory
5—Inappropriate for grade/level

APPENDIX D

ASSESSING GROUPING AND PROGRAM ARTICULATION

1. What student grouping patterns are used?

GRADE OR LEVEL

Check those used:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6							Priority 1-3
. One-to-one														____
. Small groups (5 or fewer students)														____
. Large groups (6 or more students)														____
. Total class														____
. Heterogeneous														____
. Homogeneous														____

. Is there need to study group patterns? YES_____ NO_____ Priority (1-3) ______________________

2. What features of a planned and articulated reading program are evident?;

. Is a single, planned, systematic program used for most students in the school to teach:

Rate 1-5 using scale below:

.. Decoding skills														____
.. Comprehension skills														____
.. Study skills														____
.. Vocabulary skills														____
. Is there an alternative program provided for individual children who need it?														____
. Does the teacher use the textbook manual and supportive materials?														____
. Is a written record of skills mastered by each student (basal and recreational) passed to the next teacher?														____
. Is a written record of each student's reading level provided for content area teachers?														____
. Is provision made in the school for careful reading placement of the entering student who comes with no records?														____
. Is initial reading instruction provided in the student's first language?														____

. When will money be allocated for major change of reading materials? (date) ______________________

RATING SCALE:
1—Completely Satisfactory
2—Some Improvements Needed
3—Major Improvements Needed
4—Completely Unsatisfactory
5—Inappropriate for grade/level

APPENDIX E

CAMPUS INVENTORY OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

ITEMS (Check ✓ only those necessary to proposed program	A	B	C	D
	NUMBER AVAILABLE IN SCHOOL	NUMBER AVAILABLE FROM OTHER SOURCES	NUMBER TO BE PURCHASED	ESTIMATED COST IF PURCHASED
Basal Reading Textbooks ○				
Programmed Textbooks ○				
Workbooks ○				
Worksheets ○				
Tests ○				
Multi Media Kits ○				
Paperbacks (noncataloged) ○				
Magazines, Newspapers ○				
Games/Simulations ○				
First-Language Materials ○				
Library Materials ○				
Films, Filmstrips ○				
Instructional Equipment ○				
Parent/Community Expenses ○				
Field Trips ○				
Management Systems ○				
Other ○				

APPENDIX F

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
TEACHERS' OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Name____
Last First Middle

Student's Identification No.____________________________

Adaptive Education No._________________________________

Please respond to each item by marking the number which best represents your opinion of this child's behavior:

1. Definite strength
2. Fairly strong
3. Comparable to peers
4. Fairly weak
5. Definite weakness

_____Reading (estimated grade level_____)
_____Arithmetic (skills, addition, subtraction, multiplication, div., etc.)
_____Spelling (estimated grade level _____)
_____Completes assignments
_____Attendance
_____Cooperates with teacher
_____Controls emotions
_____Relates well with peers
_____Is not disruptive
_____Attends to instruction
_____Retains instruction
_____Attention span
_____Is accepted by peers
_____Shows respect to teacher
_____Speech difficulties
_____ __________________________________

Have you contacted the parent regarding the student No___ Yes___

Results of contact (Date________)__________________________
____

Do you feel this student is working up to his potential?______
____
____

If you answered "no", can you explain why?___________________
____
____

School______________________
Teacher_____________________
Subject_____________________
Date________________________

APPENDIX G

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARENT OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Date_____________

Student's Name____
Last First Middle

Parent_______________________________Address________________

____

Phone___________________

Please respond to each item by marking the number which best represents your opinion of this child's behavior:

1. Definite strength
2. Fairly strong
3. Comparable to peers
4. Fairly weak
5. Definite weakness

___Reading (estimated grade level_____)
___Arithmetic (skills, addition, subtraction, multiplication, div., etc.)
___Spelling (estimated grade level_____)
___Completes assignments
___Attendance
___Cooperates with you and others
___Controls emotions
___Relates well with peers
___Is not disruptive
___Wants to learn
___Accepts responsibility
___Attention span
___Is accepted by peers
___Shows respect to you and others
___Speech difficulties
___Other_________________
___Vision
___Hearing
___Listening
___Understanding
___Uses his hands
___Memory
___Telling stories, jokes, rhymes, etc.
___Self image

Have you contacted the teacher regarding the student?
No_____ Yes_____

Results of contact (Date__________)___________________________
____

Do you feel this student is working up to his potential?
No_____ Yes_____

If you answered "no", can you explain why you feel this way?
____
____

(Please use other side of this paper if you need more room)

APPENDIX H

SKILLS SYSTEM FOR THE TEST OF ESSENTIAL READING SKILLS

Level K

- Building Auditory Skills (listening)
  - Identifies words with same beginning sound
  - Identifies words with rhyming sound
- Building Visual Skills (seeing)
- Building Comprehension Skills (understanding)

Level I

- Building Word Attack Skills
  - Alphabet
  - Phonics
    - Consonants
      - beginning sounds
      - final sounds
      - beginning two-letter sounds
    - Vowels
      - short vowel sounds
      - long vowel sounds
  - Structural Analysis
    - "s" and "ing" ending
    - two words that make compound word

Level II

- Building Word Attack Skills
  - Phonics
    - Beginning three-consonant sounds
    - Alternate long vowel spellings
    - Dipthongs
    - Common sounds of "c" spelling
    - Common sounds of "g" spelling
    - Common endings containing a vowel plus ck, id, nd, mp, st.
  - Structural Analysis
    - Identifies base words
    - Identifies contractions
    - Identifies two syllable words

Level III

- Building Word Attack Skills
  - Phonics
    - Silent letters (gn, kn, mb, wr)
    - Two sounds of oo and ow spellings
    - Sounds of y spellings
    - Sounds of au, aw, al spellings
    - Sounds of vowel +r spellings
    - Sounds long i and igh spelling
    - Sounds long a of eigh spelling

- Structural Analysis
    - Common prefixes
    - Common suffixes
    - Appropprial inflectional endings
        - adjectives: er, est
        - verbs: s, ed, ing
        - nouns: es, s
        - advergs: ly
    - Possessives and plural forms of nouns
    - Syllables in words of three or more syllables

Level IV

- Word Attack Skills - Level I
- Word Attack Skills - Level II
- Word Attack Skills - Level III
    - Phonics
        - Less commonly used spellings for gh/f, ph/f, au/kw, dge/j, ge/j, sc/s
    - Structural analysis
        - Prefixes: co, inter, non
        - Suffixes

APPENDIX I

ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP LISTENING SKILLS

The list has been drawn from the work done at such schools as those at Nashville, Phoenix, Cincinnati, and Minneapolis; from college listening courses; from educational journals and from my own thinking. A few of these suggestions may be applied in any classroom from grade one through twelve. In general, however, lower-grade teachers might draw mainly from the first half of the suggestions and intermediate grade teachers from the second half.

1. As a teacher, inventory your own listening and talking. If you talk very much more than you listen to the pupils, try to bring the situation into closer balance. Children imitate listening as well as anything else they observe.

2. Try to present orally many of the regular tests in all subjects. Read a test's instructions aloud, and also all of the questions, giving the pupils time to write each answer.

3. When there are messages to be carried by pupils from classroom to classroom, or classroom to home, try putting the communication on an oral basis.

4. Ask the children to list all of the sounds they hear in a given period of time; for instance, a bird singing outside the window, the noise of an airplane passing overhead, the teacher's voice, etc. Discuss what sounds the children like or dislike and why. Also discuss what sounds are most important and why.

5. Speak the last syllable of a word to the class ("ick," for example). Ask the pupils to speak aloud as many words as possible ending in the same sound (like tick, sick, pick, etc.) without repeating any words.

6. Read the description of a physical scene to the class. Encourage the youngsters to draw pictures from what they heard.

7. Read aloud a poem which is likely to evoke emotion, and then encourage the pupils to discuss their feelings.

8. After hearing a song, ask the children to describe the story behind the song's words.

9. Whisper a short message to a child at one side of the classroom. Ask him to relay the material, in a whisper, to the child nearest him. Continue this procedure until the message has been passed to every child around the room. Ask the last child to repeat aloud what he heard, and then compare it with the original paragraph whispered to the first child. Try

this game frequently in an effort to make the relayed message match the original as closely as possible.

10. Play a listening game by giving increasingly difficult instructions to one child and then another. To the first child you might say: "Peter, take the apple from the desk and place it on the chair." To the next child: "Fred, take the apple from the chair, show it to Mary and then return it to the desk." To the next child: "Ellen, take the apple from the desk, show it to Peter, show it to Fred and then put it on the chair." The game of instructions continues until someone fails to follow the directions correctly.

11. Play a listening game which asks that each child in turn repeat the words he has just heard and add one more word. The teacher gives the first word, such as "The," and calls on a pupil to add a word. He may say, "The house..." The next child might say, "The house that..." The game continues until a participant fails to repeat the words correctly or to add a word that makes sense.

12. In all class activities, make a policy of not repeating instructions. If repetition is necessary, call on the pupils to repeat what was stated. Establish the same policy in regard to the school public-address system, that announcements will be made only once and repetitions will have to come from classmates.

13. Encourage the children to develop a set of standards for good listening; print and post them in the classroom. The standards should be decided upon through class discussion. One such standard might be: "The good listener keeps his eyes on the person talking."

14. Read a short poem to the class and ask the pupils to guess the title, or to make up a title. Encourage the children to give reasons for their choices.

15. When children are absent from class, give those present the assignment of summarizing and passing on orally the instructions missed by the absentees.

16. Select a few paragraphs of narrative material from a book or story and read aloud. Have members of the class act out what they heard.

17. When a guest speaker is coming to the school, have a discussion with the children concerning what the person might talk about. After the speech have another discussion concerning what the speaker did talk about. Try to direct the second discussion toward determining the speaker's main point.

18. Occasionally play the game of "Twenty Questions." Build the game around people or things currently being considered in classroom studies, such as history or literature.

19. Develop a class discussion on listening manners. For example, a discussion might evolve around the question: "Why is it important to 'hear out' what a person has to say?"

20. From a play or story select a few hundred words of pure conversation between two or more characters. Read it aloud to the class and then have the pupils guess the story behind the conversation.

21. Read descriptions of well-known people--perhaps people being studied in class--and have the students guess their names.

22. Give the class a brief, simple description of what nonverbal communication means. Then ask different students to speak two or three words, giving them different meanings by varying their voices, using gestures, etc. For example, you might use the sentence, "I want you." One child might say it with a snarl. Another might say it in soft, gentle tones. Another might shap it out abruptly. Ask the class to give the different meanings the phrase acquires with each utterance.

23. Explain to the class that what we hear is often affected by senses other than hearing. For each of these senses discuss how it might affect listening. For example, with the sense of touch, the discussion might develop around how the feeling of a handshake affects what we hear.

24. Ask the pupils, in pairs, to interview each other on hobbies or special interests. After the interviews talk about the possibilities of learning by this method. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of interviewing as compared to reading.

25. Ask three or four students to prepare short talks on a favorite subject. Tell the student speakers that they may have to talk under very difficult circumstances that are being planned, but no matter what happens they should continue speaking and not take personal offense. Ask them to leave the room. Instruct the class to listen very carefully to what each speaker says, until the class receives a secret signal from you. At the signal the students are to stop paying attention, perhaps to start to read books or to look out the window. Call the student speakers into the room, one at a time, and ask them to give their talks. When they are finished, ask the speakers to discuss how they felt when the class withdrew its attention. Follow this with a class discussion about the listener's responsibility to the speaker.

26. Select written material that contains words unfamiliar to the students and list the words on the blackboard. Read the material aloud after asking the students to seek out the words' meanings from the context of what is heard.

27. Read a story or play and ask the class to plan a good stage setting for acting out what was heard.

28. Ask the class members to write down all the words they can that affect them emotionally. Compare the word lists and discuss them. Why do certain words affect individuals as they do? How were the words acquired and do their meanings, as understood by the students, have a basis of fact?

29. Tape-record a short radio newscast that presents facts without commentary. Also record a news commentator who broadcasts his own opinions among the facts. Play the two recordings before the class. Ask the students to point out the differences between the two recordings. Can the students separate fact from opinion in the news commentary?

30. After they hear a classroom talk on some subject such as geography or biology, ask the students to plan a film strip that might be used to illustrate the oral method.[1]

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[1] R. Nicholas and L. A. Stevens, Are You Listening? (McGraw-Hill, 1957), pp. 214-19.

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